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Taking a stand for an inclusive church



RONALD COOPER
INTEGRITY, CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

In the latter half of the 19th century, a Wisconsin politician appealed to like-minded fellows that much needed to be done to assist their party if it was to emerge victorious from the campaign of the day. Employing a phrase that had been used as a simple typing exercise he urged, "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party." Certainly it is reasonable to suggest that when an organization is in questionable straits, calling on its members to act may produce the hoped-for results. However, the call to action often encourages those with differing positions to also act.

Often the swell of activity of the latter group can overshadow, even overwhelm, the efforts of those making the original appeal. The opposing group may be able to attract larger numbers to its camp, may garner greater financial backing from within and without, and is often not dissuaded from clouding the core issue with unreasonable doctrine. History has proven that persuading people to support change because it is the right thing to do is much more arduous a task than scaring them into maintaining the status quo. Any change can be unpalatable to some. Years later, when acceptance of these changes becomes commonplace, even those whose opposition was vehement may wonder what all the fuss was about.

Societal changes

A century ago women could not vote. Today, such disenfranchisement is unimaginable.

A half century ago, blacks in many American states dutifully marched to the back of the bus. Then Rosa Parks chose to take a front row seat.

Thirty years ago, homosexuals in Toronto entered their bars and clubs through alleyways and back doors. Today, we have the openness of Church Street and an annual festival that attracts hundreds of thousands.

Not all that long ago women attending Anglican churches had to distinguish themselves by covering their heads. Female priests were a rarity. Prior to our last General Synod one of the leading candidates for Primate was a Bishop named Victoria.

Societal and religious changes occur because courageous people stand up and demand that they occur. Though always bitterly opposed, these people are unwavering and refuse to back down. Acceptance of these changes occurs because the vast majority of us, sooner or later, realize that it is the right thing to do.

Bigotry in our Church

Currently the Anglican Church of Canada is dealing with whether or not each of its members should be treated equally. We are told that this debate is specifically concerned with the issue of same-sex blessing/union/marriage.

However, it is not. It is much more basic and far more important than that.

Some Anglicans believe that a gay man or woman is not entitled to the rights that are accorded to a heterosexual man or woman. They believe that when Christ said "Walk with me into my father's kingdom," he meant only those that are straight. Unable to cull the New Testament for evidence to support this, they brandish the old story book testament, discriminating against gays and lesbians while, presumably, stoning their neighbours for working on Sundays. As they are prepared to welcome all into their churches, they are happy to offer to work with us to eradicate the evil that has grasped us.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

All you need is love



Bishop and Executive Archdeacon announce their retirement

CHRISTOPHER GRABIEC
EDITOR

At Synod Council on the evening of February 6 and the Clergy Day of February 7, Bishop Ralph Spence announced his intention to retire on February 29, 2008. He has also announced that there will be an Episcopal election for a Coadjutor bishop on June 2, and if necessary an Episcopal Consecration on September 30 of this year. During the months following the election, the Coadjutor Bishop will work with Bishop Spence to ensure a good transition to the new leadership.

Archdeacon Marion Vincett has also announced her intention to retire. Her plans are not yet solid, but she anticipates that she will leave her office around the same time as the Bishop if not a little before.

Bishop Spence was born in 1942. He was ordained to the Diaconate in May of 1968, to the

Priesthood on December 1 of 1968 and to the Episcopacy on September 21, 1997. He served first as rector of St. Bartholomew's, Hamilton and then St. John the Evangelist in Thorold. He became Dean of Lincoln East in 1979, and in 1980 he was appointed Honorary Canon of Christ's Church Cathedral. In 1982 he became Rector of St. Luke's Church in Burlington. Ten years later in 1992 he was appointed as Archdeacon of Trafalgar.

Bishop Spence is married to Carol and has three children—Anne, Sarah and Christopher.

Bishop Spence's children speak of their father with a great deal of love: "Mum's love and support has enabled dad to be who he was meant to be; a kind, unifying and incredibly strong leader."

"Dad taught us to love knowledge. He is an absolute encyclopedia; forget Wikipedia, if you ever need information about anything—

especially history, geography, political science, Britain, the church, religion in general, the monarchy, flags or heraldry—the man is incredible."

"He loves music, and when we were little, we all used to dance to the Beatles. One of his favourite songs is, "All You Need is Love," and we can't think of a more fitting song for him, because dad above all else, is about love, and demonstrates every day that love is all you need."

In addressing the Staff at the Diocesan Resource Centre, the Bishop said that he was happy about his decision to retire and yet was saddened by the thought of his leaving. "Of course," he continued, "the tradition of our diocese is that there are always odd jobs for retired bishops. You may see me answering the door around here at some point!"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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The Bishop visited St. Christopher's Church in Burlington on January 7 to re-dedicate their new organ which was formerly at Christ Church, St. Catharines. During the service, the liturgical dancers interpreted The Lord's Prayer with special guest Robert Stephen, currently dancing with the National Ballet of Canada.



Eleanor Gilbert, who was awarded the Order of Niagara by Bishop Spence on January 14, 2007 at Credit Valley Hospital during the Bishop's Episcopal visit to the Church of the Epiphany. Eleanor is a member of the Wilson family, a founding family of the Church of the Epiphany. The Wilson family donated the land on which the church sits today. In her own right, Eleanor has long been an active and involved member of the parish. In her own words, "The Church has been my life."

175 Years and still counting

Celebrating anniversary week at St. George's, Guelph

ROSEMARY ANDERSON
ST. GEORGE'S, GUELPH

It was 1832, five years after the founding of Guelph, when the congregation of St. George's Church held its first service in the small church just built in St. George's Square. Those celebrating that occasion probably never thought that 175 years later, the members of the congregation would be honouring it again, though now in a much larger, stone edifice on the banks of the Speed River.

St. George's Anglican Church has planned some very special activities and services for the week of April 21 to 29 to celebrate the 175th Anniversary.

Archdeacon Thomas M. Greene, rector of the parish, will be among those welcoming everyone to the church building on Saturday, April 21 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm for a tour focusing on the stained glass windows and the interior carvings. That evening, a gala anniversary party at Guelph Place will feature dinner and entertainment.

On Sunday at 10:00 am, ev-

eryone will gather in St. George's Square, at the site of the first St. George's Church. The Right Reverend D. Ralph Spence, Bishop of the Diocese of Niagara, will officiate at a ceremony with civic dignitaries and then lead the congregation in procession along Douglas Street to Woolwich Street, where the present church opened for worship in 1873. Bishop Spence will preach at the Choral Eucharist at 10:30 am, dedicate a commemorative stained glass window, and officiate at a tree planting on the church grounds.

Monday, April 23, St. George's Day, a recital by carillonneur Don Hamilton and an organ recital by Gerald Manning, Director of Music at St. George's, will be held at noon and will conclude with the Eucharist at 1:00 p.m.

On Wednesday, April 25, at 7:30 p.m., Craig Kielburger will be the guest speaker at the church. Kielburger has been an inspiring and committed advocate for children's rights, since, at the age of 12, the boy from Thornhill, Ontario,

learned about the number of very young children forced to work in factories in Third World countries. He organized his friends to form an organization called (Kids Can) Free the Children. The organization grew to become the largest youth organization in the world. Craig, now a young man, has met with political and religious leaders around the world and been featured on major television programs, as he continues his work for children.

The following Saturday, April 28, the church will be open again for guided tours as part of Doors Open Guelph, a city-wide heritage event held by the Guelph Arts Council.

On Sunday, April 29, the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Most Reverend Andrew Hutchison, will lead the 10:30 am service and the reception following will bring the week's celebrations to a close.

There's much more happening during this Anniversary Year. For more information, go to www.saintgeorge.ca.



New wind at St. James, Dundas

PAUL CHAPPEL
COMPOSER - ST. JAMES, DUNDAS

Almost thirty years ago the last pipe fell out of the organ loft when St. James Church, Dundas was destroyed in a fire. Now, thanks to an anonymous donor and countless hours of volunteer work, the sound of real pipes will be heard again in the beautiful building on Melville Street. The Venerable Jim Sandilands, Archdeacon of Mohawk, can now be heard mentioning various items related to a pipe organ such as windchests and blowers from the pulpit. Douglas Brownlee, Director of Music, is ecstatic about the work organ builder Leslie Smith is doing on the organ.

When St. James burned, the theme of the restoration project was the Phoenix, and in many ways, this pipe organ will be another phoenix rising from ashes and given in love. When St. James-the-Apostle Church closed, it's wonderful pipe organ was

given to St. James, Dundas as the basis of the new instrument. Thanks to the skilled work of the Rev'd David Linn, Ron Vickers and a crew of others, the tiger maple casework of the St. James-the-Apostle organ now stands in the Dundas church. The façade pipes—fancy term for the pipes you can see—are in place, although one is a bit wonky and will need some straightening. On Christmas Eve, a shout of delight rose from the capacity congregation as Archdeacon Sandilands announced that by the next Christmas, the organ would be sounding in its full glory.

We are deeply fortunate for the hard work and prayerful care of all the people involved, and especially our organ consultant, the renowned recitalist and teacher, Professor David Palmer of Windsor. As Johann Sebastian Bach wrote on his music scores, "Soli Deo Gloria"—To God be the Glory!

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All Saints Niagara Falls continues transformation



LYNNE CORFIELD
ARCHDEACON OF BROCK

Sometimes being in a position of leadership calls us to make difficult decisions. One such time occurred on Tuesday evening at Synod Council. After much deliberation and review of a six and half year journey—which has included closing three parishes and selling two churches and one hall—the members of Synod Council were called upon to take a very close look at the progress of the Mission point which was created at All Saints Niagara Falls in June 2004 when the parish was disestablished.

First I presented a review of the major points in the journey. This newspaper carried a detailed article in the November 2005 issue which you can find in the archives on the Diocesan website

at www.niagara.anglican.ca. The piece of this story that pertains to All Saints is that following the disestablishment the small and dedicated congregation continued to meet each Sunday, first with the Reverend Brian Burrows providing weekly worship and one day a week pastoral care. Brian ended his term at All Saints Mission in December 2005.

During this 18 month period the Chancellor and Executive Officer were at work finding a Canon that would allow us to move forward with a Mission and still provide some oversight and governance of the now disestablished parish. Canon 4.5.7 proved to be helpful and allowed the appointment of a Diocesan Administrator in the person of The Reverend John Ripley. John continued to provide weekly worship for the people of All Saints Mission Church and also pastoral care, while another day a week he tried to make inroads into creating a mission. John made regular visits to Synod Council and provided timely reports throughout his tenure.

In November 2006 Rob Reid facilitated a day of discernment

and the people who came decided to pursue some off-site ministry with the local YMCA. This is still in the early stages of development. John Ripley fulfilled his one year contract and decided not to continue this work which put the future direction of the mission back on the Agenda for Synod Council.

At the January meeting a delegation from the All Saints Board of Management made presentations to the Synod Council and were able to share their views about how they were progressing and their hopes and dreams for the Mission. Later in January Mission Strategy met and heard from John Ripley, and they also deliberated the information provided and some goals that might be achieved if we are ever to create a true Mission site in Niagara Falls.

All this information was reviewed at Synod Council and a heartfelt discussion followed. Uppermost in our minds of course were the people who will be affected by the decisions that we make. Here is the motion that was passed unanimously by Synod Council:

MOTION: Rob Welch/Bruce McPetrie

Whereas the Synod of the Diocese of Niagara retains control of the Mission of All Saints be it moved that the Synod Council requests that the Bishop suspend weekly worship at the Mission effective March 4, 2007.

And that Archdeacon Lynne Corfield be appointed Diocesan Administrator charged with ensuring that the following tasks be accomplished:

- Pastoral care be provided to the remaining worshipping members of All Saints Mission.
- Secure the building for future use.
- That the memorials and other sacred objects be dealt with in accordance to the Policy and Procedures of the diocese in consultation with the Regional Archdeacon.
- That a ministry and mission plan be established in consultation with the Niagara Falls parishes.

That the Diocesan Administrator continues to report to Synod Council on the progress of these tasks. Please keep us in your prayers as we move forward with faith and hope!

ALL SAINTS TIMELINE

February 2000: Jim Powell appointed as Coordinator of Niagara Falls Team Ministry

September 2000

Demographic Study Results:

- 6 parishes and only enough projected growth to sustain 4.
- \$300,000 of accumulated debt from 3 of the Niagara Falls parishes (St. Martin's, All Saints, and a small amount from Christ Church).

Spring 2002

St. Stephen's closes with most parishioners choosing to join Holy Trinity, Chippawa. The sale of St. Stephen's property facilitated paying down the debt of Holy Trinity, Chippawa.

June 2004

St. Martin's disestablished and the property was sold. The people mostly went to Christ Church where the Canon Jim Powell was to become an Honorary Assistant.

June 2004

All Saints was also disestablished; Jim Powell went off to Port Colborne to do the interim and Reverend Brian Burrows was engaged at All Saints for every other Sunday.

Plans were to make All Saints a Chapel of Ease to Christ Church to preserve the historic site which was complicated by its surrounding cemetery. There was also some hope that it could be the hub of the wheel for some kind of Mission.

January 2005

Marion Vincett chaired a special vestry to discuss the Chapel of Ease and it was evident that this was not going to happen. There was animosity from former St. Martin parishioners.

Attempts were made to sell the parish hall at All Saints; the third attempt was successful though the Diocese now holds the mortgage on the property.

Summer 2005

Marion Vincett, Rob Welch and Lynne Corfield worked to find a way to continue the mission, as All Saints was disestablished and not covered by usual governance. Canon 4.5.7 was used to continue the work in trying to form a Mission. All Saints continued to meet every Sunday for worship, with Brian Burrows working one day each week for pastoral care. They continued to work on building the congregation but nothing to develop a mission strategy.

January 2006

John Ripley, appointed as the Diocesan Administrator at All Saints, formed a Board of Management and worked on turning over the finances to the Diocese. He attempted to develop a mission with the other Niagara Falls clergy and met resistance due to the perception that All Saints was acting as a parish, which caused hurt feelings in parishioners from closed parishes.

November 2006

All Saints Church 150th Anniversary Dinner.

Rob Reid facilitated day of discernment and the mission latched onto two possible projects.

January 2007

John Ripley resigned as Diocesan Administrator and suggested Lynne Corfield take over as interim.

Mission Strategy Meeting: Proposals for All Saints Mission and how we move forward!

You will perhaps say that, by this means, I encourage people to be beggars. But the same thoughtless objection may be made against all kinds of charities, for they may encourage people to depend upon them. The same may be said against forgiving our enemies, for it may encourage people to do us hurt. The same may be said even against the goodness of God, that, by pouring blessing on the evil and on the good, on the just and the unjust, evil and unjust people are encouraged in their wicked ways. The same may be said against clothing the naked, or giving medicines to the sick for that may encourage people to neglect themselves and be careless of their health. But when love of God dwelleth in you, when it has enlarged your heart, and filled you with the bowels of mercy and compassion, you will make no more such objections as these.

William Law, Eighteenth century

Getting to know you

CAROL SPENCE First Lady of the Anglican Diocese of Niagara



FRAN DARLINGTON
HONORARY - ST. JAMES GUELPH

Stories of clergy families often include descriptions of challenges in parish life. Carol Spence, however, spouse of our Bishop, the Right Reverend D. Ralph Spence, cheerfully affirms her years of experience this way "Lots of happy things have happened to me!"

Carol's cheerful outlook began early, in Brampton, Ontario. "I had an idealistic childhood. I walked or biked everywhere, and got a lot more experience [than youngsters today]. I would play baseball, but when it was time to come home, my mother, a Girl Guide Commissioner, would blow her Girl Guide whistle!" A Gold Cord Guide, Carol has fond memories of the World Camp for Guides, at Doe Lake ON: "We met people from all over the world!" Fifty years later, Carol maintains contact with a Guiding friend from Newcastle-on-Tyne, England.

Carol's Anglican father attended St. Mildred's School, which then admitted boys to Kindergarten and Grade One. Her mother, the only girl of six siblings, and a staunch member of the United Church, raised Carol and her younger brother, David, in that tradition. Carol's maternal grandmother, recognising her daughter's need for female companionship, had sent her to Bishop Strachan School in Toronto. When the overcrowded Brampton High School began operating on staggered hours, Carol's mother sent her to "BSS" for Grades 12 and 13.

Boarding meant a major transition, but Carol's love of and gift for music fostered her optimistic attitude. "Music, always music!" With the BSS choir, she went to the 1958 Eisteddfod in Wales. "We sailed on the Sylvania. We toured, and sang everywhere—it was wonderful!"

Graduating in 1959, Carol studied Voice at Toronto's Conservatory of Music, and then attended Teachers' College. After teaching for three years, Carol began studies towards a B.A. in Fine Arts at Victoria College, University of Toronto, focusing again on music.

Meeting an Anglican seminarian

A lack of residence space meant that Carol's brother, David, a medical student, lived at Wycliffe College, an Anglican seminary on the U of T campus. David introduced Carol to a young seminarian, Ralph Spence. Ordained in 1968, Ralph became the Curate at St. George's Church, Guelph, and they married in 1969. Carol joined St. George's choir, and taught at College Avenue School. "We loved Guelph, [but] unfortunately, curacies are short, and I had just joined the Madrigal

group when we left!"

In 1970, Ralph became Rector of St. Bartholomew's, Hamilton—now amalgamated with the former St. Timothy's and renamed the Church of the Resurrection. Carol remembers, "We had a lovely backsplit house, I joined the choir and became a Girl Guide Lieutenant. Ralph got this wild Irish setter, Vicki. Both Sarah and Anne were born there. It was really fun, I loved it! There were lots of young families—St Bart's was full of kids. We had groups in, and I always did the same meal!"

In 1974, Ralph became Rector of St. John's Church, Thorold. "It was very different. The people were older, everyone was related. There were only three children, the two Spence girls and the organist's son. There was a good choir though, and a beautiful Rectory, a Lake District house [in England] with leaded windows!" Carol remembers Thorold's paper industry: "Management sat on one side of the church, paper workers on the other. It gave you insight, not judgement. It was something to live through a couple of bad strikes. Robertson Davies could have written a novel."

"A really strong ministerial—regular ecumenical gathering of local clergy—shared special services in the summer. The clergy had young families too." The Spence's son, Christopher, was born there, and "we had everybody to celebrate!" In 1975, when Ralph was diagnosed with cancer in his eye: "We had great care" from the community.

The Right Honorable Ed Schreyer, then Canada's Governor General, participated in the 150th Anniversary of the Welland Canal. The Honorable Pauline McGibbon, then Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and the Most Reverend Howard Clark, the retired Primate and a former St. John's choirboy, came to St. John's to celebrate the Diocese of Niagara's 100th Anniversary.

Learning history, making history

In 1981, for Ralph's Sabbatical, the family spent nine weeks in Great Britain, staying in lovely old homes, visiting family and historical sites, and meeting Carol's Guiding friend from Newcastle. Carol chuckles at a Sabbatical memory: "Christopher tried out every bathroom. They all flushed differently and he was fascinated!" She marvels, "All the children love history—it's amazing how much they remember!" Then, thoughtfully, "We don't make enough of our history in Canada. We're always in the shadow of the United States [and Europe]. At St. Mildred's School, I asked my grade one class to name Canada's Prime Minister. They gave me the name of the United States' President!"

In 1982, Ralph became Rector of St. Luke's Church, Burlington. On his first Sunday at St. Luke's, Christopher performed a table-top imitation of the pop star, Michael Jackson! Sarah and Anne joined the choir and became servers; Christo-

pher became crucifer; Carol joined the Altar Guild and taught Sunday School. She did not join the choir because "I felt I wanted to sit with the children in church—their father was never with them, often not their mother either!"

In 1984, St. Luke's celebrated its Sesquicentennial, 150th Anniversary with "big dinners, making costumes and hats, a takeoff on [Gilbert and Sullivan's] HMS Pinafore, and the Primate, Ted Scott, as speaker." With government support, a senior's apartment residence, St. Luke's Close, was built on Church grounds, and opened by the Lieutenant-Governor, the Honorable Lincoln Alexander. Ralph also began his long friendship with the local Lutheran pastor, Michael Pryse, now Bishop of the Eastern Synod.

Carol describes St. Luke's: "There were so many women's groups, especially a younger 'women in action' group that did outreach work. They had a fantastic bazaar, a roaring Sunday School, good choir... the Summer Club, always lots of volunteers to do lots of things. We always had a project! There were wonderful families who shared reciprocal dinners, and the neighbourhood was very close. Our girls were the oldest, so they did a lot of babysitting." Carol speaks warmly of St. Luke's curates, and the special programs they led, espe-



cially at Christmas and Easter. She continues thoughtfully, "Life was very busy. We were at St. Luke's all the time. Those years... I can't believe how fast they went!"

Becoming Niagara's First Lady

In 1997, Ralph's election as Niagara's Diocesan Bishop meant yet another transition for Carol. "What was I going to do? I decided I would go with Ralph, to churches where we had been, and join the Cathedral choir and the Altar Guild—it's a busy place!" The Spences also bought their first house: "On a gray November day, we came to what would become Flagstaff House. We had no intentions of buying something this old [1879], but someone had done the renovations. It's been just the best thing, it's fabulous. It had a garden, which meant I could plan and do!"

Inheriting her mother's love of gardening, Carol is a keen garden-

er, volunteering with the Cathedral gardeners and at the Royal Botanical Gardens. At the Cathedral, "we've been so lucky with Bishopsgate [the west entrance]. The James Street North people talk to us all the time—they love it! It should be magnificent in the spring, with all the bulbs we've planted." At the RBG, "we're busy preparing for the Spring Sale. I learn a lot from the speakers, and about Latin names." The young Ralph Spence joined "the Children's Garden with Leslie Laking, an RBG Founder. He loves to garden but hasn't time, and he's fantastic at arranging flowers!"

Carol treasures her family; Sarah, who studied History and Political Science at the University of Toronto, then Public Relations at Humber College, and is now Vice-President of a communications company; Anne, a U of T graduate in History and Art who studied Comedy at Humber College, now works in advertising; Christopher studied criminology at Ottawa University, then followed his sisters to Humber College, studying Human Resources before taking a position in that field. "They're all in Toronto, they have great times together."

"We've been lucky! We haven't had anything terrible. We love being with our children and they with us. Family is very important. They're healthy and happy. What more could you want?" This petite, gracious woman has cheerfully shared ministry with her husband, raised their delightful family, and enriched many people and experiences throughout her life as a clergy spouse, a mother and friend—so appropriately the First Lady of the Diocese of Niagara.

WE'RE FORTUNATE THAT NIAGARA IS SMALL. The population is dense, but people can get to the Cathedral, and are excited about coming here.

er, volunteering with the Cathedral gardeners and at the Royal Botanical Gardens. At the Cathedral, "we've been so lucky with Bishopsgate [the west entrance]. The James Street North people talk to us all the time—they love it! It should be magnificent in the spring, with all the bulbs we've planted." At the RBG, "we're busy preparing for the Spring Sale. I learn a lot from the speakers, and about Latin names." The young Ralph Spence joined "the Children's Garden with Leslie Laking, an RBG Founder. He loves to garden but hasn't time, and he's fantastic at arranging flowers!"

Back to teaching

Sensing a need "to get back into teaching," Carol volunteered at Central School, then at St. Mildred's School, Oakville, and the Spence daughters became students there. Sarah chose to finish her high school years locally, but Anne went to school in France. "Ralph's Father lived with us, and we had dogs—Laddie, accepted by Christopher as a substitute for a brother, then Luke. I taught at St. Mildred's and changed hats for the weekends. I don't know how I did it all!"

Having completed Parts I and II of a Primary Specialist's Certificate at Brock University, St. Catharines, Carol completed Part III with two weeks study at Chichester, England, accompanied by her family. From 1986 to 1997, Carol taught at St. Mildred's. In 1998, she became a supply teacher at Hillfield-Strathallan School in Hamilton, and in 2001, began teaching Junior Kindergarten there.

Summing up her experiences, Carol smiles, "All the parishes are different, but they're all fun. We hated to leave! Going to a new parish [means] everybody knows

you and you're frantically trying to learn names!"

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Taking on instead of giving up



MARNI NANCEKIVELL
DIRECTOR OF TRANSITIONAL MINISTRIES

Ah, Lent! The Lenten Seasons of my childhood are marked by certain memories. One familiar phrase from those Lents long passed was, "And what are you giving up for Lent?"

It was expected that the answer would be candy, chocolate, meat, wine or cigarettes. Although in the 21st century of my daughter's youth, I know of teens who gave up Nintendo, and another who confined her television watching to three hours per week.

In Lents gone by, I also recall Lenten Mite Boxes that came out of the practice of Lenten Self Denial. The idea was that one was to set aside the money from those non essential frills—like chocolate or wine—and out of my personal act of self-denial, some greater good would be served.

Giving something up for Lent isn't a bad idea, actually, as it is a discipline that invites us to live with the pattern of conscious choices.

Switching to a positive discipline

I remember one Lent when I shaped my Lenten discipline differently, and decided to take something on, rather than give something up. I chose, that year, conscious care of my body as my discipline. Now that year my physical being had

survived a grueling period of overwork, as unwise compensation, it had drowned in an excess of food and drink, and my body not well exercised. I chose a positive discipline of my body that year.

Come to think of it, that might not be a bad discipline for me to take on again this year.

My lasting insight from that Lent was that, overall, in the Christian tradition, we tend to pay more heed to denying our bodies rather than enhancing our spirit. Somehow, we have bought rather too whole heartedly into the Augustinian division of the human being. We have believed that flesh is bad, while spirit is good. I challenge that assumption.

The inner being

St. Thomas Aquinas once wrote that "Sins of the spirit are more grievous than sins of the flesh." That reminds me that in the grand scheme of things, whether or not I give up chocolate for Lent is rather inconsequential, if I go on living in a way that does not pay heed to my sisters and brothers, or my God.

Jesus, after all was a 'mediator of the spirit'. He taught not so much denial of the 'outer self' as attention to the inner being. Jesus invites us into a soul-space where we can encounter the Holy, both beyond our individual beings and, at the same time, deep within ourselves.

The Sacred for me is the encounter, the dance, where we balance both our 'inner knowledge' with our capacity to choose and act upon that which is good and wholesome, for us and for the world. To choose otherwise, is to give in to the capacity for evil.

Sin-obsessed

As I write this, I find myself labouring heavily with the words, trying to convey what I mean. After all, it is much easier to be against something than pro-actively for something, as many political parties have discovered. So it is, as Norman Pittinger once wrote, "that a great deal of Christian talk has been sin-obsessed." It is much more challenging for many of us to live a spirituality not rooted in self denial or sanctions and admonitions, but to live out one's

without regard to the environment. Even worse, I could live for my pleasure only, choosing to drive a Hummer, polluting my vacation lake with the chemical by-products of a large outboard motor, buying disposable this or disposable that, and to hell with the consequences, for my generation at least.

Or, I could choose the way of responsibility; the path of positive choices. I am inspired by the ecologically responsible choices of my green friends, Patrick and Robert who live

long ago, spilling my collection of peppers onto the conveyer belt, the young man at the cashier's desk asked, "What's the matter? Weren't there enough plastic bags in the vegetable aisle?" I used that moment to tell him that I made an active choice not to use more plastic than absolutely necessary. "Huh?" said that young man, "I never thought of it that way." So, as I am inspired by the witness of my friends, Patrick, Robert and Doug, I pass that level commitment along to those with

The damage to this fragile earth, our island home, most likely caused by human actions, will continue for centuries, even if we immediately put an end to the kind of pollution with which we've been battering the earth since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution

faith in a 'via positiva'—a phrase about which I learned through the writings of Matthew Fox.

Via positiva

Let's put flesh on the theory of the via positiva. Today, the headlines on the CBC website tell us something that I suspect that we've all known for quite some time. The climate change that we've wrought through our live choices is unequivocal. The damage to this fragile earth, our island home, most likely caused by human actions will continue for centuries, even if we immediately put an end to the kind of pollution with which we've been battering the earth since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution—and, what's the likelihood that we're going to be able to quickly convert our behaviour that drastically. So, the spiritual choices are these: I could deny that this is an issue for me, and choose to live

very intentionally in harmony with the earth. Their recycling and composting regimen requires lots of hard work, but they think it is worth it.

And then, there is my friend Doug, who, as he approaches retirement, chooses to ride a motorcycle, rather than a car, in his work as a United Church minister.

Every day choices

Those people, and their spiritual and ecological choices, inspire me in my own stewardship of the earth. As I collect my compost for the backyard composter, as I scoop my dryer lint into it, I think of them and the example they set by their positive choices.

When I am shopping in the grocery store, I make choices that rule out those plastic clam shells in which food comes, instead purchasing fruits, vegetables and bakery items in a more environmentally responsible manner. Not too

whom I am in contact.

At this point in my life, spiritual discipline—whether it is in the form for care of the earth or personal prayer, whether it is in the pastoral care of my sisters and brothers, or whether it is in my stewardship of my treasures—is about living a certain kind of life. Values such as living a life of integrity, which is holistic, nurturing and compassionate, are central to my being. Living a life and embracing a spirituality, which honours both flesh and spirit, is my call. It is about being a whole person of God. That's my Lenten discipline, both now and in the years to come.

.....
Canon Marni Nancekivell is the Director of Transitional Ministries for the Diocese of Niagara. This year, her Lenten Reading is the book *Sins of the Spirit, Blessings of the Flesh* by Matthew Fox.



When God Stood Up
James Cantelon
John Wiley & Sons Inc, 2006

CHARLES STIRLING
HONORARY - CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

The title seems to say it all, and that all is based on the story of the calling of a man to a God sized mission. It is an informative, unfolding drama of what is really the most critical issue of our time, AIDS in Africa. The book seems to affirm God's presence in the most ravaged places on earth, as millions of our brothers and sisters are depending on us to be God's extended hand.

Cantelon's mission is to awaken the world and open our eyes to the suffering of widows and orphans in the HIV/AIDS-stricken countries of Africa. He has led a movement to organize churches in Africa to provide food, shelter, palliative care and education. Churches, organizations and individuals from across North America are beginning, at last, to respond to his initiatives. Reading this book and getting involved will be a like-changing experience. In reality to deny action, is to deny faith.

As Cantelon narrates his accelerated response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, it reminds one of the image G. K. Chesterton captured of St. Francis: "always running." Within a matter of weeks, the author catapults out of Vancouver to the Durban colloquium, to hospitals and church events across the African sub-Sahara. You often look for a page just to catch your breath. With the awesome destruction of human life described here, what could be more appropriate? *When God Stood Up* carries a sense of urgency and a call for breathless haste.

From James Cantelon himself come these thoughts: "As I stood on the sandy soils of Africa over five years ago, I saw a land with great potential. But that land was trembling in the precipice of the world's greatest disaster.

"God birthed in me a dream that local churches would become indispensable leaders, activists and caregivers in a battle against HIV/AIDS. When God showed me the local church, I saw Mother Theresa. I saw the sick being cared for by the healthy. I saw the North American Church and African Church working together as partners."

Available at The Cathedral Shoppe for \$21.95.

About the author

James Cantelon hosted the program Eye to Eye and was co-host of 100 Huntley Street for eight years and is currently president and founder of the Canadian charity called Visionledd.

Whether we gaze with longing into the garden or with fear and trembling into the desert, of this we can be sure - God walked there first! And when we who have sinned and despoiled the garden are challenged now to face the desert, we do not face it alone; Jesus has gone there before us to struggle with every demon that has ever plagued a human heart. Face the desert we must if we would reach the garden, but Jesus has gone there before us.

James Healy, Nineteenth Century

United in truth, show the Lord's own gentleness in your dealing with one another and look down on no one. If you can do good, do not put it off, because almsgiving frees you from death.

Polycarp of Smyrna, Second Century

There are as many ways to pray as there are moments in life. Sometimes we seek out a quiet spot and want to be alone, sometimes we look for a friend and want to be together. Sometimes we like a book, sometimes we prefer music. Sometimes we want to sing out with hundreds, sometimes only a whisper with a few. Sometimes we want to say it with words, sometimes with a deep silence.

In all these moments, we gradually make our lives more a prayer and we open our hands to be led by God even to places we would rather not go.

Henri Nouwen, 1932-1996

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So what are you selling?



MICHAEL PATTERSON
DIRECTOR OF EVANGELISM

A clergy friend of mine related a story that got me thinking about what it is we think we are 'selling' when we go about our business of evangelism.

The story went something like this. My colleague was sitting in his office when the phone rang. He answered, "Good afternoon, St. Swithian's Anglican Church." The woman on the other end of the line said, "Hello, I would like to order five pounds of the spare ribs, three pounds of bacon and three stuffed pork tenderloin. I'll be by around five to pick them up." My amused colleague replied that she must have the wrong number. To which the woman said, "Aren't you that butcher that had that special on ribs and pork?" "No" replied my friend, "We are a church. You have the wrong number!" Not to be put off the woman concluded, "Well, what do you sell? What business are you in?"

As amusing as this story was, these questions stayed with me for quite a time. What do we sell? What business are we in? It is in this season of Lent that Christian people are called

is made to feel welcome." I have no doubt that, to be an inviting community, is the best of intentions. However, I also believe that too often we are warm and welcoming to those that look and behave as we do. To be accepting and welcoming to those that may look, act or feel differently than we do, may be another thing.

In the example of Jesus it becomes very clear that He encourages us to be light on judgments and heavy on care and support. As we all have 'feet of clay', we really don't make very good judges. As we each share the common bond of falling short of who God has meant us to be, we know about mercy, forgiveness and tolerance because we have stood in need of it many times ourselves. I would like to think that what we are 'selling' is a church, not made up of people who think they are better than the rest, but people who know that they can be better than they are.

A church at its best is not only a place where people can be accepted as they are, but it is a place where people are being inspired to be what they can be. We might like to call this the 'mutual aspiration society.' One of the greatest gifts our people have to give to each other is the gift of encouragement, the good word, the recognition of a life well lived, the pat on the back that has the capacity to lift one's soul from the depths of despair.

Far too often of late, our Church has become a community, not of encouragement and care but a community of conflict, disagreement, and judgment of who is right and

We are to be a harbour of humanity where the art of being human, of being real, of being vulnerable can be learned through the person of Jesus Christ.



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upon to think about what God is calling them to. What is our true purpose as followers of Christ? How have we fallen short? These are the hard questions that we often fail to come to terms with. But if we are to be intentional about the ministry of evangelism, it is vital that we are clear about what we are 'selling' and we must know ourselves, our strengths and our failings. Why would someone want what we are offering? In the work of our Church, we have to ask, what are we doing and is it making a difference? Are we being true to our calling to be the Body of Christ in the world?

I came across a quote from the former dean of divinity of Princeton University Rev. Dr. Ernest Gordon who wrote; "In the wild seas of violence and uncertainty that characterize our times, we are in deepest need of islands of sanity, or harbours of humanity, in which the art of being human can be learned." This is what we are selling; this is what we are called to be about. We are to be a harbour of humanity where the art of being human, of being real, of being vulnerable can be learned through the person of Jesus Christ. All around us we see examples of people who are feeling hurt and estranged; people, who are desperately searching for a place to feel wanted, accepted and cared for.

What we are selling as a 'harbour of humanity' must be the sense of acceptance where people feel welcomed as they are with no strings attached. As I visit parishes and ask, "What are you offering?" the response is most often, "We are warm, friendly community where everyone

who is wrong. In such an atmosphere, we are not the Church of Jesus Christ. We are more concerned with convincing each other that what I am 'selling' is better than what you are 'selling' that we miss the opportunity to 'sell' anything at all!

We seem to be forgetting that one of the central concepts of our Christian faith is the concept of grace; free, unconditional grace that is at the heart of the Gospel. Grace is unearned, unmerited love given freely without conditions for all of us who fall short. As the Church, we have this to 'sell' to the world. Our task is to communicate this grace and help people experience this unconditional, non judgmental grace of God who loves us, warts and all. Grace is experienced in the sacraments, in the Word of God and in the relationships we have with each other. It is but by the grace of God within this 'harbour of humanity' that we call the Church that we must trust in to make us all we can and have to be.

Can you imagine a church where each of its members was committed to creating an atmosphere of affirmation and support for another? Where all were welcomed no matter how different they were from us? Where we could accept and embrace all those who held opinions that differed from our own? Wouldn't it be truly exciting to 'sell' our 'harbour of humanity' as a place that truly was just that? If we could do that, we would certainly have no problem answering the question, "What business are you in?"

Both responses, feasting and fasting are based on the knowledge that food is gift. Both portray a relationship to God... The abuses of feasting or fasting all stem from a single fact: The failure to remember that food is God's gift. Those who eat to excess suffer from delusion that they sustain their own lives and that the lives of all other creatures are insignificant. Those who fast only to win the acclaim of others or to force God's own hand also presume that they sustain their own lives.

Irene Nowell

Worship and the Kingdom of God



MICHAEL THOMPSON
RECTOR - ST. JUDE'S, OAKVILLE

There was a time when worship in Anglican churches was a simpler matter than it is today. I remember from childhood worship that simply 'followed the book.'

But as long ago as 1964, things began to change. For the first time, I encountered, at the Church of the Transfiguration in St. Catharines, the idea that people could make decisions about worship. Bill Elkin, the Rector of that parish, had commissioned a light blue booklet for the 9:30 am service, especially designed for use in a congregation that included children and young families. I couldn't possibly remember the details, but I remember the booklet.

Worship canopy

Bill Elkin was the first priest I knew who tried to move what you might call the "worship canopy," and I was pretty disappointed when we moved from St. Catharines to London Ontario, and dis-

covered another "Church of the Transfiguration" that made no such attempt, and in which I was relegated to an eighth-grade Sunday School class under the leadership of an elementary school principal who fairly routinely sent me out to stand in the hallway.

Since then, our church has struggled with its worship canopy—whom it should shelter, and whom it should exclude. Under the canopy it is warm and dry, and it is no surprise that people want to be there. But when the canopy simply stays still, the excluded are always excluded, and those inside are permanently inside. It is when we understand the worship canopy as a moveable object about which we can make some choices, that things become complicated.

An errand from God

The church of the twenty-first century cannot afford the permanent division of 'inside' and 'outside.' We are on an errand from God to bear witness to how God can touch and heal, can equip and empower persons towards fuller, deeper, and more joyful lives. And our worship, if we take that errand seriously, will include people whose formation, experiences, and practices are not always identical to what we think of as "how things are" or "how we do things here."

In fact, if there are no such persons in our midst, we have abandoned the call to be the Body of Christ, and by decision or default have become a 'designer community,' a gathering of the like-minded, a club for people who like what we like.

There is in our baptism a call to something other and more than that. The Body of Christ, into which we are grafted as the beginning of our disciple pilgrimage, is not held together by sameness but by the reconciling work of love made known in love's Servant, Jesus.

In the covenant of our baptism, we affirm the centrality of God and of God's purposes, and withdraw our own comfort and preferences from the bulls-eye of our lives in order that God's mission may occupy that place.

Discomfort

In this missional church, discomfort is part of our life together. In fact, the absence of discomfort is an indicator that something or someone has been overlooked or neglected. The worship canopy cannot cover every preference simultaneously. I find myself singing "Onward Christian Soldiers" and someone else has to sing "She Flies On." And we are most the church, the Body of Christ, when we sing another's song

with the same vitality we offer when the hymn is one of our own favourites.

Jim Cruickshank, when he was Bishop of Kootenay, once said that the Kingdom of God happens when people who don't belong together gather at the table. People who don't belong together are people who don't see things the same way, use the same words, share the same formation, love the same hymns.

What holds such a feast together is not just what we have in common, but also, and especially in the face of our diversity, the One who calls us together. What holds such a feast together is that it feeds us for the work to which God is calling us, for the errand on which God is sending us. And what holds such a feast together is the promise that a Stranger will join us there, and that when we serve any stranger by moving the canopy to keep the guest dry and warm, we serve that Stranger who saves us.

The desire to connect

So it is that sometimes we are not warm and dry in worship. It is not what we expected, or had become used to. In fact, it is at just such moments that the Spirit may be moving through us, inviting us to yield to a hunger other than our own. Of course this feast must

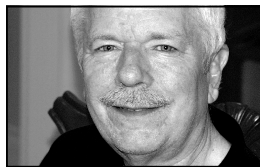
feed us as well. Of course there is a place for our desire to connect with what has formed and shaped our lives. Of course we can expect to find something familiar and well-loved in common worship.

Embracing the unfamiliar

For all that, we can, in vital worship that bears wide witness, also expect to be arrested by the unfamiliar. And over time, we may even come to embrace it, as we have, for example, embraced the women who preside at holy tables in churches across this diocese; as we have, for example, embraced the sharing of Christ's peace, and in embracing that once-awkward practice, come to embrace friend and stranger; as we have, for example, embraced an expanded ministry of the baptized in worship leadership, the cup that once was reserved for ordained hands being shared among the hands of the baptized.

This is, of course, a Lenten discipline of relinquishment. It calls to mind the words of John the Baptist, who "must decrease, that he may increase." But if we embrace the mission of God, who gathers us under the canopy of our worship, it is not simply passivity or resignation; it is an embrace of our capacity to yield to the saving work that God longs to do, that God dares to dream we might join.

Tiny Nanticoke and Cheapside model spunky Christianity



ALAN L. HAYES
THE ITINERANT CHURCHGOER

Ten Anglican churches serve Haldimand county; so far I've been privileged to worship in eight of them. Half are in urban areas—Caledonia, Cayuga, Dunnville, Hagersville, Jarvis—but in a moment I'd like to pay tribute to two really rural congregations, the southernmost points in our diocese. They're small, but oh so spunky.

Haldimand continues to call itself a county for historical reasons, but actually, after years of provincial fiddling with municipal organization, it's a single-tiered municipality. It has fewer than 45,000 people, and its growth rate is minuscule.

On the map, it looks roughly like a slightly stout isosceles triangle. Its base, about 50 kilometres wide, is the Lake Erie shoreline, and its apex, about 35 kilometres north, is Caledonia, a twenty minute drive south of Hamilton. The principal geographic feature is the wide Grand River, which meanders southwards from Caledonia to Dunnville.

The city is named for a governor in colonial days, Frederick Hal-

dimand. He gave this land to the Iroquois in 1784 in gratitude for their military help during the American Revolution. But gratitude doesn't last forever. For obscure reasons that are currently being disputed in the courts, all this land came into the possession of white newcomers in the years after 1834.

Early missionary

By 1838 an Irish Anglican with the wonderful name Bold Cudmore Hill (1799-1870) was a horseback missionary here, with responsibility for 350 square miles of territory. He helped organize most or all of the Anglican congregations in Haldimand, plus Glanford (Mount Hope) and Woodburn (Hannon). It's remarkable to think that one out of every ten churches in the diocese of Niagara today owes its existence, under God, to this one preacher.

For the next century, this was a land of small farms. Speaking to people in these congregations, I've met quite a few who are retired farmers or the children of farmers. But their farms are long gone. To farm competitively you need large acreages and mechanization. The result is agribusiness.

I met a fellow at St. Paul's, Jarvis, who trucks for Sun Valley Foods. They hatch 725,000 chicks a week, which are transported to various farms for grooming as future Chicken McNuggets. Near Cheapside, there's a factory farm operator who finishes 5000 hogs at

a time—"Finishing" a hog means growing it from 50 pounds to 250 pounds.

In the 1970s the province promoted heavy industry here, and confidently predicted huge population growth, but the results were disappointing. The biggest effort, the 2500-acre Lake Erie Industrial Park at Nanticoke, remains 90% unsubscribed. Its main occupant is struggling Stelco, which employs 1400 people to manufacture hot rolled steel. A sprawling Imperial Oil refinery and the huge Nanticoke coal-fired generating station are nearby.

Handsome rural churches

When I visited Christ Church, Nanticoke, the congregation had only fifteen people, including one visitor besides myself. This seemed small until I discovered that the population of Nanticoke, which has only five streets, is 185. Why, if an Anglican church in Hamilton could attract the same proportion of the surrounding population, its congregation would number 39,000, including 2600 visitors! The very pretty red-brick gothic-style church has really elegant stained glass windows and pine floors. The people who do the cleaning told me that it also has lots of bats.

About 12 kilometres east and north you'll find Cheapside, an even smaller community than Nanticoke. St. John's Anglican Church has a handsome whitewashed wood-

frame church with Gothic styling for its windows and doors.

What an extraordinarily active and committed group they are! A couple of years ago they decided to build a parish hall downstairs with kitchen and washrooms. This required raising the church onto pilings and digging a basement. Although they had a contractor, they did quite a bit of the work themselves, including some really snazzy faux terrazzo flooring. The result is a surprisingly warm, bright, useful, and welcoming space.

Not only are they systematically paying back the debt on that, but they told me with justifiable pride that they balance their budget and faithfully cover their diocesan assessment.

House church style

In both churches, laypeople are actively involved in the services reading lessons and leading intercessions, and since the congregations are small, you get the impression of a high participation level and a close fellowship. The experience is a little like a house church. Both congregations also have very good organists who choose their music well and play upbeat accompaniments. At Nanticoke there's a question period for the minister at the beginning of the service, which is a wonderful opportunity for adult education.

Rural ministry, once the lifeblood of Canadian Anglicanism, has become its Rodney Danger-

field. You hear stories in some places of clergy who want to Torontoify the country folks by imposing a more current style of doing things, and then move as soon as possible up to a city church.

So it was good to see that the rector at Cheapside has spent eleven fruitful years there, with a view to retirement this spring. People at St. John's and at its sister church at Hagersville told me quite feelingly how much they'll miss her and her husband. In particular, they told me, they'll miss her engaging, thoughtful, and well-written sermons though she promises to continue part-time past retirement. And the rector at Nanticoke, who arrived in 2005, absolutely loves his parish—which includes Jarvis—and intends to stay as long as possible. He has obviously made quite a hit with the people too. I won't evaluate the preaching the day I was there, since I was doing it.

Christ Church, Nanticoke, will cease regular services this spring as it's just not economically feasible to continue. But it will open for special occasions. Last Christmas it drew 75 to worship!

I give thanks for the great amount of good that Christ Church and St. John's have accomplished and, by grace, will continue to accomplish. These corners of God's vineyard are inconspicuous to most of us, but they aren't to God, whose redeeming and sanctifying love the two churches proclaim and minister so faithfully.

Where do we go from here?



GRAHAME STAP
RECTOR - ST. ALBAN'S GLEN WILLIAMS

This is a question churches of all denominations ask and I suspect most never find an answer. I believe the reason most cannot find answers is because they have not learned to engage the modern culture of society which for a large part finds the church less and less significant. Churches are growing and more people are coming to church on a regular basis but as a percentage of the total population it is still a small amount. Here in Georgetown we have a population of approximately 35,000 people of which about 5,000 or 14% regularly attend church. How do we change this?

Following the spirit of God

How do we respond to what seems to be a post-Christian world? How do we engage this modern culture and remain faithful to the gospel? Perhaps we need to stop following the path of our ancestors and start looking at our churches as being missionary churches right where we are in our communities, reaching out to others without abandoning the gospel. We need to accept that the world around us is changing. It is changing in ways we could not imagine even ten years ago. We need to ask ourselves, are we willing to follow where the spirit of God leads us? Are we willing to stop looking at the church as a safe haven, secure behind the strong walls, warm

and comfortable with our traditions and our hymns by Wesley (who died in 1788) or John Milton (who died in 1674)? There is nothing wrong with either of these writers, but do they bring new young people into the church? Do they help us to engage the modern society of today? Probably not.

Should we just continue in the same old way or should we tackle head on the changes we face? Should we take a risk and step out of our comfort zone not knowing if we will succeed or fail?

Do we put the cart before the horse?

If we are going to change, how do we begin? Perhaps we need to ask ourselves what is the business of the church? Over the past few weeks as we prepared the budget for 2007 we talked about new furnaces and putting more money into the building fund so if they break down we will have the money to replace them. I know sound business practice is the reaction of many, but if we do this are we being faithful to the Gospel or to our comfort zone?

Should it not be our mission that determines our budget not the other way around?

Should we not put mission first instead of what is left over after we have made sure that we are safe and snug in our comfortable pew?

Why is mission so important? Why should mission be first? It is important and should be first because it is what we are called to do. As Christians we are called to teach the love of God to all the nations (Matthew 28:19-20). I believe there is a deep desire for God in our country. A deep desire for something other than what society offers but the history of

the church leaves a lot to be desired. People have a deep distrust of organized religion. How do we overcome this and bring people into our churches?

I believe we accomplish this by offering: community, acceptance, honesty and the knowledge that God loves all things that God created. I believe an atmosphere of non-judgment, of acceptance, of sharing God's blessing will bring people. I also believe we not only can do this but are already doing this here in the Niagara Diocese. We need to take the next step.

Doing what God calls us to do

What if we advertised an open baptism Sunday when anyone wanting to be baptized could come and receive with no one turned away? Would this be cheap grace or would it be the beginning of a journey for many to understand their relationship with their creator? What if instead of saving for a rainy day we advertise as we did at Christmas when we had more people in church than ever before? Does this not show our willingness to share God's grace? As St. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9, "For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law." Paul did not lessen the Gospel in any way by doing this. He did what was necessary to bring as many as possible to enter in to the love of God and he never counted the cost.

Perhaps this is where we go from here and become one with society to win as many as possible knowing that we are doing what we are called by God to do.

ST. ANDREW'S AND ST. JOHN'S

A tragic fire St. John's did close
And we at St. Andrew's shared their woes,
We offered them to share our church,
We could not see them left in the lurch.
So side by side we worship God,
In our separate ways we did him laud,
And both of us with one accord,
Sing praises to our risen Lord.
But soon our paths again will part,
But we'll remember in our heart,
Those few short weeks now spent and gone,
When this was the church—of St. Andrew's and St. John's.

Christian community in action

TED BITTLE
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, THOROLD

As a member of St. John the Evangelist in Thorold I am looking forward to the year 2007. This is the year our new hall that was lost in a fire two years ago will be ready. On November 20, 2005, I was participating as a team member of Cursillo weekend number 40 and during our Eucharist service we were informed that the Church hall of St. John's was lost to a fire and the church had sustained serious smoke and water damage.

There were five members of St. John's on team that weekend and we were in shock. Suddenly things changed for us - we were surrounded by the clergy, team members and all the new Cursillistas. They offered us prayers and words of comfort. We were not alone. We were experiencing Christian community in action.

On Monday we learned of the outpouring of Christian support from our community. Our neighbours at the Presbyterian Church changed their hours of service to accommodate us. They provided office space for our rector and church secretary and allowed us the use of all their facilities. The United church allowed us the use of their facilities so we could have a scheduled concert. Other churches

have had dinners and concerts to raise funds to help offset our commitment and expenses.

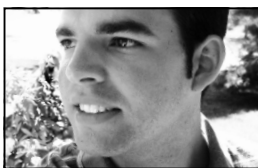
I have included the poem "St. Andrew's and St. John's" written by a member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. It expresses the oneness we shared.

We at St. John's are just this month moving into our new hall and on behalf of St. John's I want to thank all of diocese for your prayers and support over the last two years.

For me personally, waiting for our new facilities to be ready has been a humbling experience. It has taught me that no matter the disaster, God is always with us. We have strong leadership from our rector Cathie; the wardens and I must praise the congregation for their support and patience.

We are excited to begin using our new facilities and I invite you one and all to come to St. John's on April 21, 2007 from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm for the Walk in the Spirit sponsored by Niagara Cursillo. The theme of the day will be "Grow in Spirituality" and The Reverend Paul Tinker will be making a guest presentation. Registration costs \$5.00 per person and can be paid at the door. Tea, coffee muffins and home made soup will be provided.

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BILL MOUS
TRINITY COLLEGE, TORONTO

Each January, second-year students from Trinity College's Master of Divinity program fan out across the Canadian Church and beyond for their second semester. Unlike their peers, these students won't be studying in the hallowed halls of Trinity, but rather in parishes large and small, urban and rural, near and far. For this semester, experiential learning trumps classroom learning as students are offered a glimpse of parish ministry first-hand.

This year, our diocese hosts five students completing an internship: Matthew Griffin at St. Paul's Westdale, Nancy Rowe at St. George's in Georgetown, Lucinda Landau at St. David's and St. Patrick's in Guelph, Jason Pollick at St. George's in St. Catharines, and Paul Maynard at St.

John the Evangelist in Niagara Falls. As Matthew Griffin explains, their experiences have thus far been quite positive: "I continue to be thrilled and amazed at how welcomed I have been at St. Paul's, and how exciting it is to be part of this community as it re-imagines how to do outreach well as a parish."

Three phase program

These internships are part of the three-phase field education component required for Trinity College students. In the first phase, students complete a part-time placement of at least one hundred and twenty hours at a parish of their choice. In this phase students become better acquainted with parish ministry and are able to integrate their studies with hands on experience.

The second phase, the internship semester, provides students with the opportunity to participate in the life of a parish full-time for three months as an intern. Placements are determined by the student through consultations with the Executive Archdeacon and Bishop, the Director of Field Education at Trinity College and the prospective parish supervisor. In this phase, interns set their own learning

goals and continue to grow in their liturgical, pastoral, and administrative abilities much like they did in the first phase, but in a more concentrated way as they are in the parish full-time. In addition, each student takes responsibility for leading a Christian education project in the parish.

Learning goals take on many forms and often explore areas that are specific to one's particular sense of vocation. Some have a strong pastoral emphasis, as in the case of Lucinda Landau, who hopes to learn how to "work with young families to strengthen family prayer in the home during Lent through use of the parish website." Lucinda plans on achieving this by creating a blog "to capture responses and anecdotes of candid family moments when prayer collides with our very youngest members," in addition to reviving the popular Sunday night movie night and discussion as part of Christian reflection in the parish.

Paul Maynard, on the other hand, aims to learn more about parish administration. Consequently, Paul is immersed in all sorts of meetings from Corporation and Parish Council to a host of different subcommittees. Additionally, Paul plans on leading

a five-week biblically-based study group on stewardship, using the Good Sense program.

In the third and final phase, students have the opportunity to work on an area of their ministry such as preaching or pastoral visiting that might need some further improvement and focus on this area for their third year placement.

Field education

The field education component of any program is often the most formative for a student. It is an opportunity to learn valuable practical skills necessary for ministry and continue one's vocational discernment. According to Lucinda she finds her work "wonderfully rewarding and I'm discovering new gifts that I had no idea were mine to claim." This comment no doubt underscores the importance of excellent teaching and mentoring in the internship process from both the parish supervisor, but also from parishioners.

Paul also adds that the internship has been invaluable in learning the pace of a parish priest. "In addition to meetings of the parish, there are appointments with couples planning marriage, with families of the about-

to be baptized and a large number of funerals. I am finding that I have to be careful to incorporate time for reflection and prayer in my days. They could all too easily be filled with other things."

In three short months, interns get a glimpse of what full-time ministry entails. It is here where the academy meets reality. Most interns eagerly look forward to their internship—perhaps because an internship often feels more directly related to one's sense of vocation than sitting in a classroom, but I think it is also because many relish the opportunity to continue their discernment by being immersed in the reality of ministry and by learning from the best theologians of the day—the people they encounter during their internships.

Stay tuned...

I too am completing internship this semester, but mine will be taking place at St. George's Anglican Church in Grenada which is part of the Diocese of the Windward Islands. Stay tuned for more about this and the theological students' international internship program in the next couple months!

Unmasking our truths



NISSA BASBAUM
RECTOR - TRANSFIGURATION, ST. CATHARINES

My first crack at theological college was in 1978 when I did a year's study at Salisbury and Wells in England. I was the only woman among about 65 full and part-time students—the college has since closed, which some might think was related but alas, it was a lack of money rather than the presence of women that finally shut its doors.

Being the only woman had its advantages—like a more elegant room in a quiet corridor and, more to the point, a bathroom all to myself. Thank heavens for small mercies!

My closest neighbour was Tony, a third-year student who lived in the room directly above me. He was an extremely witty fellow whose sense of humour usually produced the college pantomime each year. In England, a pantomime is a local take-off of one of a number of traditional children's fairy tales, with men often taking women's parts. Written by Tony, the 1978 pantomime at Salisbury and Wells was no different save for one thing: Tony added a real woman to the cast. A woman who actually had the leading role. Not so hard to guess who that was.

A 'cub' Anglican

The script for this pantomime was the customary Cinderella tale with a few revisions, major among these Cinderella herself, who was cast as a neurotic American princess who couldn't handle being touched by the prince let alone being married to him. Whenever I think back on this role, I find myself hoping against hope that the part was created for me because of my magnificent sense of humour rather than my incredible neurosis. Truth be told, it was probably a little bit of both. The Cinderella that Tony produced for this pantomime was what you might call a caricature of Nissa Basbaum, and we all know that most caricatures bear some resemblance to the real thing!

I was a mere 23 years-old when I attended Salisbury and Wells. Fairly recently graduated from journalism, I had just completed a year and a half of employment as the cub reporter for the Grand Falls Advertiser in Grand Falls, Newfoundland. I was also a 'cub' Anglican, having only converted to Christianity about six months prior to this move to England to study theology. Combine all of this with being Jewish, well, no wonder I was neurotic! I am reminded of a line from one of the episodes in the television series, Joan of Arcadia, a line from a character known only as Freedman: "Dude," he said to one of his classmates, "I'm Jewish. Neurotic goes with the territory!"

Our innermost insecurities

I had chosen to study theology because I had chosen to give up journalism, at least in the manner in which I had recently been employed in that profession. I thought religious affairs

journalism had a nice ring to it so it seemed to make some sense to give myself a little more grounding in theology. Hence, my sojourn to England and specifically, to Salisbury and Wells. At the time, it seemed as good a place as any and, more to the point, it was far away from home, which meant I could work out the recent changes in my life in relative seclusion from close family and friends.

As I reflect back on that first year in England and recall some of who I was and just what it was about me that produced that neurotic American princess called Cinderella, thankfully, I recognize that all of us have bits of our past that have to be reworked and reshaped in order to become the potentially divine creation that each of us is intended to be. And the way we do this is to let go of some of the attachments to which we have held for so long, attachments which we think make us feel secure even as we know deep down, they are generally the very things that have a way of shaping and setting in stone our innermost insecurities.

Masks

Living behind the mask of humour that produced that "neurotic American princess" allowed me to hide the fears that I probably had about being the only woman at the college, the only foreigner at the college and the only new Christian at the college. That mask protected me from having to deal with so many doubts about my own competence. And it's certainly not the only one that I've ever worn. Over the years, there have been many, all of them related to one anxiety or another that, for some reason, I have felt needed covering up.

Each one of us wears a mask at some point in our life, some of us more often than others. We hide behind these masks in the desperate hope that people won't be able to see what we have convinced ourselves are our frailties and our failings. We fervently pray that these masks will hide the real us from the real world.

Growing closer to God and others

One of the most powerful images for me about the final moments of Jesus' life is what he was wearing when he died. If any of the pictures come near to the truth, and I think they do, the reality of those final moments is that Jesus was pretty much naked in front of the crowd, stripped of anything that might have protected him from the gawking eyes of friend and foe alike. He had few clothes to cover him up, let alone any mask.

It's been a long time since I've considered giving up something specific for Lent. I used to forgo eating ice cream for the season until I realized that sometimes ice cream is the only thing that gets me through the day. As I contemplate my time at Salisbury and Wells, however, I think perhaps there is something I might try to give up, not just for Lent but for life. It may be a good idea for me to attempt to divest myself of some of the masks I wear.

The way I figure it, the reason for giving something up is to bring us closer to God and to those whom God loves. What better way to accomplish this than to rid ourselves of the very things that inhibit us from doing this in the first place?



The environment

A mainstream issue



COLLEEN SYM
SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

It's time to be concerned about the other stewardship - the stewardship of creation. With the environment emerging as the public's number one concern, it's about time that Anglican's join the conversations, debates and dialogues about issues such as climate change, sustainable development and water. We can't leave it solely to the greener members of our congregations or the next generation. The time to act is now.

In a lecture *Can the tree of life survive climate change?* for the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture on August 8, 2006, Bishop George Browning of Canberra and Goulburn stated not only is the environment the big social justice issue of our time, it is a core concern of people of faith:

"The environment" is the term we use for the space in which we live—no more no less. A home in which there is constant squabbling between the adults is an 'unhappy environment' in which to bring up children. The environment in its purest sense is not a description of anything tangible, it is not a description of water, or trees or warmth, although it of course includes all these things, it is the space given to all living things to evolve, flourish and ultimately die; it is, if you like a description of what God was doing on the first three days of creation from Gen 1:1-3:

"And God said let there be light and there was light and God separated the light from the darkness.

"And God said let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters to separate the waters which were under the firmament from the waters that were above the firmament.

"And God said let the waters under the firmament be gathered

together in one place and let the dry land appear."

The New Creation

In these acts of God, an environment was created in which life could be born and flourish. When we encounter the story of the New Creation, Jesus, we are led very quickly to understand that God's intention is the redemption of all that he has made, indeed, nothing less than the total environment.

"In the beginning was the Word and the word was with God and the Word was God, he was in the beginning with God and without him was not anything made that was made" (John:1:1).

To speak of the environment then is to speak to the core of faith—the space necessary for life.

"I have come that you might have life, life in all its fullness (John 10:10). This is not something peripheral, something that Christians might get around to when they are less consumed with more important things like agreement on Baptism and Eucharist.

Closer to home, Bishop Peter Coffin of the Diocese of Ottawa put it this way February 24, 2001:

"[The environmental crisis] is not simply another issue. It is a concern that lies at the heart of the theologies of all people of faith. Like the Gospel that proclaims justice for the oppressed, concern for the environment is not an optional extra for those who feel so inclined. It is not only a matter of self-interest, though it surely is that, but it is a matter of who we are in God's intention for all creation. The 'environmental crisis' is not just about land, water and air. It is about a 'natural world'. It is about a 'just world' as well."

In our Diocese we are ideally situated to become aware and take action. We are surrounded by lakes, rivers, forests and running through the Diocese is the Niagara Escarpment, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. Likewise in the Diocese urban sprawl, urban decay, industrialization and the loss of agricultural land are all around us.

What should we do?

First of all, don't get overwhelmed.

Actions we can take as individuals and collectively at our Churches and in our communities are parts of efforts going on all over the world to restore the integrity of creation.

Acknowledge

Why not as a congregation acknowledge an observance such as International Earth Day on March 20, 2007, or Earth Day Canada on April 22, 2007. If you need more time to plan then how about World Environment Day on June 5, 2007. The theme is "Melting Ice: A hot topic." Websites with resources for all ages are associated with each observance.

Educate

Invite a speaker from a local environmental organization to speak to the congregation. Learn about campaigns organized by Kairos and take advantage of the resources on climate change, water and energy efficiency.

Act, Pray and Preach

The Ecology and Theology Group of the Diocese of Ottawa has developed a resource that can help us begin our good stewardship of the earth. *Renewing Our Relationship with the Earth: The Guide* is available for download on the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa website.

It's okay to start with simple things that you can do as part of your church community. Things like having adequate recycling facilities in the church kitchen, composting, avoiding use disposable dishes, cups and serviettes, buying in bulk, and serving fair trade tea and coffee.

Try practicing what the Guide refers to as the 5 Rs: Reverence for all creation. Reduce the amount of waste, Repair instead of throwing away, Reuse and Recycle.

Resources to help you incorporate concern for the environment into worship are available at www.ecojustice.org, www.ecojusticenet.org and www.justicecamp.org.

Really, the environment is such a mainstream issue that even us tradition loving Anglicans should be embracing it by now and be willing to change.

On pregnancy and Lent

MARTHA TATARNIC
ASSISTANT CURATE - ST. JUDE'S, OAKVILLE

If you are ever tempted toward dualism, to imagine that as human beings there is a realm we can access of pure spirit, pure mind, a realm separate from the messiness of our physical, bodily existence, pregnancy will bring you back to earth.

I don't know that I've ever been more aware of myself as a bodily being than I have in the past five months of pregnancy. Your skin gets tight. You get acne like a teenager. You move around half the time feeling like there are weights attached to every muscle you have. Your eyes are puffy. Your appetite and your bladder take on the personality of a temperamental diva. And of course your body shifts and swells and grows and blossoms in all kinds of unpredictable and totally beyond your control ways.

If you can normally comfort yourself with the thought that you're your own worst critic and nobody else is half as interested in what's going on with your body as you are, that doesn't work in pregnancy. It seems pregnant women are in the same category as celebrities when it comes to our bodies. In fact, pregnant women and celebrities apparently become fair game onto which we project all of the opinions, comments, criticisms and mixed emotions about our bodily beings.

There is the worry, the need for control: "How much weight have you gained? You shouldn't be putting on weight too fast..." There is the veiled disdain and disgust: More references to being fat and chunky than I can even count. The tense and unresolved relationship between food and our bodies: "You're eating for two. Indulge!" and "Don't overeat, whatever you do!" The wonder: "Can I touch your belly?" The nurturing instinct: "You look tired, you look pale, you look drained. Are you looking after yourself?" The delight: "You look wonderful! You glow."

Believe me when I say, one hardly knows how to process such a range of comments.

Even without the public commentary, it would be difficult. It would be difficult because frankly, I don't know that many women who are all that well-adjusted in their bodily existence to start with, and certainly not many of us who are in our child-bearing years. Most of us have fought the diet wars at one time or another. Most of us are haunted by some vision of what our bodies are supposed to look like that our real

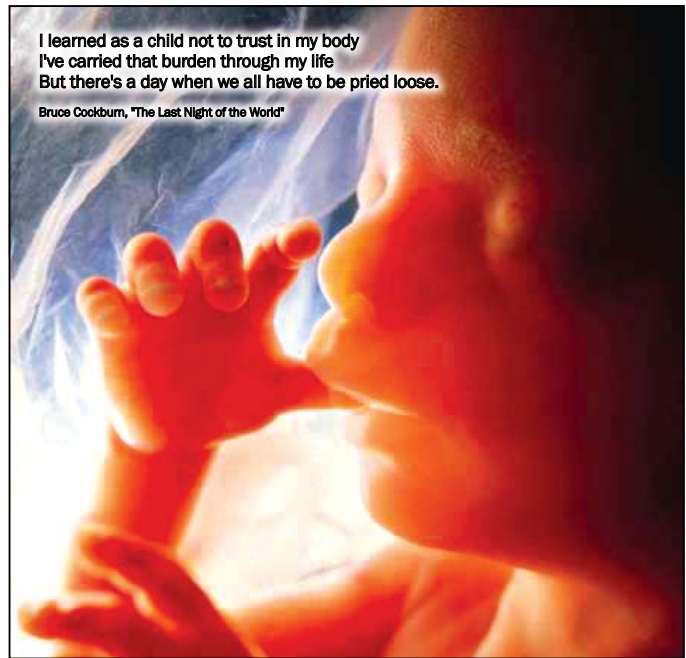
bodies never seem to measure up to. Most of us count as virtues: the ability to lose weight, to not gain weight, to maintain an exercise regime, to have energy and discipline for busy, full, productive lives. And although pregnancy is a time of incredible joy, delight, wonder, excitement and anticipation, how exactly does my body know how to build a baby? And, isn't being able to sleep soundly at the drop of a hat sort of wonderful? And, was that really a tiny little foot that my own body has made that I just felt kicking me? And that sneaking suspicion, is it just me, or is that rounded belly quite a lovely thing after all? It is also a time when you've got to come to terms with some basic lack of control.

For example, if, like most of the women I know, your ego is frighteningly breakable when it comes to issues of weight and body image, and/or if you have journeyed through most of your life believing that you've got to prove yourself, prove your worth, justify your right to take up space, through measuring up in your career, your relationships, your looks, your well-roundedness, then pregnancy will require you to become a little differently adjusted.

Either that or you'll have to spend the entire nine months not just with nausea, fatigue and the host of other pregnancy side-effects, but also with a brand new social phobia and a general tendency toward hibernating from the glaring eyes of the world.

If you'd like to choose the former option, or if you're not pregnant and have found these sorts of burdens heavy enough for long enough that you'd like to imagine making this journey a little differently, our faith has some pretty wise things to say about what it is to be mortal, which means that our faith has something to say about what it is to live in these bodies of ours.

We have traditions that have told us something about treating our bodies, and the bodies of others, with tenderness, dignity and respect. We have practices that help the desires and needs of our bodies to be channeled into a grounding in God's love and compassion for our neighbour, practices that help us to filter out the white noise of loud, aggressive and often toxic demands on those needs and desires. And we have our theology. A scandalous theology, even. The theology of the incarnation. The wacky claim that God chose to inhabit a human, mortal, embarrassing, not-in-our-control, fragile and miraculous body. That God had to inhabit that body in order that we might truly know God, that we might truly



I learned as a child not to trust in my body
I've carried that burden through my life
But there's a day when we all have to be pried loose.

Bruce Cockburn, "The Last Night of the World"

know God's love. That something of our vulnerability, something of the risk of living and loving in these bodies, something of the miracle of life in these bodies, is actually at the core of who God is.

And it is good. Which doesn't mean that we haven't often twisted our religion to say something quite different. Our Lenten practices are a wonderful example of that. Lent can all too easily provide a forum for pious self-righteousness when what is really going on is a profound discomfort in our own skin. It can encourage us in thoughtless deprivation for deprivation's sake. It can present ample opportunity to feel as if we have for once taken control of our bodies while meanwhile missing the opportunity to let ourselves learn something from this mortal existence, to learn something about surrender. We can feel good about giving up those things which are damaging to us—smoking, over-eating, talking behind other's backs—for short periods of time at special times of the year, and disregard any of God's invitations to a more permanent and life-giving transformation. At its most basic mistreatment, Lent can even be an opportunity to couch an ultimately insatiable

desire to "just lose that last five pounds" in religious terms—I'll give up junk food for Lent.

We are masters at making religion into a profile of all of our own psychoses. But of course, there is also incredible wisdom, healing, growth, to be found in this Christian season. There is in fasting and in hunger something to learn about compassion for the hunger of our world. There is in practices of prayer, disciplines of reflection and meditation, something to learn about who and what's important, about what truly gives life. There is in 'giving up' for Lent, something to learn about freedom and healing from all that clutters up and complicates our lives. There is in 'taking up' for Lent, something to learn about re-centering our lives on the priorities to which we actually wish to give our hearts.

And in pregnancy, a ninth month period that has its own somewhat Lenten encouragements to 'give up' and 'take up' there is a possibility, one that I am trying with great hope to learn. The possibility of growing in delight, wonder and often gracious surrender for this thing that my own fragile, mortal, not-particularly-in-my-control body is participating in bringing to life.

Ontario patients cannot be illegally forced into the first available bed

ADVOCACY CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY

Many people end up thinking about long term care for themselves or their family member only after a catastrophe has happened, such as a stroke, broken hip, or death of a caregiver. Often, they have little or no notice that placement will be required, and are only faced with having to make this decision after the person has been admitted to the hospital. This is obviously not the best time or place to be making such a decision, and the mass of information and the pressure is not conducive to making the best decision.

Recent news articles have shown an increase in hospitals adopting policies aimed at forcing elderly patients to accept beds in long-term care homes which are far from their homes. Many hospitals in Ontario have such "first available bed" policies, whether they are called this or not. The policy may require the patient to select a long-term care home from an available bed in a certain designated geographical area, or they are simply told that there is a bed available in a specific home which has a "suitable bed," as determined by the hospital, and which they must accept and move to immediately. Usually, the person is told that if they do not comply with this policy, they will be charged the daily rate.

They are told that they will be charged rates of \$700-\$1300 day even if the refusal is in respect of a bed in a home that is determined by the senior and/or his or her family to be not appropriate to meet the senior's care needs. In some cases the refusal to take the bed is because the home is at a very far distance from the senior's family and community and then the senior would be isolated from his or her supports at a time when he or she needs it the most. In some cases this distance would also directly affect the senior's care particularly if family provide care to that senior (i.e. assistance with feeding, emotional assistance, or assist with behavioural or mental health issues).

The threat of a large per diem charge for staying in a hospital bed particularly impacts on low income people. Low income people are also very likely to be in the worst position to accept placement in a long term care home at a distance from family as their family cannot afford the costs of travel etc.

In the opinion of the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly, such policies are illegal. Hospitals need to find alternative methods of dealing with their bed shortages without taking it out on the elderly.

Hospitals have no authority to demand that people go to specific long-term care

homes. The law states that a person or their substitute decision-maker may choose up to three long-term care homes which they believe meet their needs. Nothing in the legislation allows for hospitals to have any say as to which specific homes the person should go to. Nor, in fact, do they have any authority to charge people who are waiting for placement, anything above the "chronic care co-payment rate" which is equivalent to that which is charged for ward beds in long-term care homes.

Lawyers at the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly advise people that are awaiting transfer to long term care that they should actively look for placement in a long term care home if that is the type of care they need rather than the acute care. They just can't stay in hospital because they want to. Persons needing admission to a long term care home are asked to choose up to three long term care homes for possible admission.

This is in the long term care homes legislation. That legislation confirms that the person must consent to admission to a home for that admission to occur. Being told that you must take a bed in a home that is not one of your choices is not consent. The hospital may ask you if you are willing to take the "first available bed" but if you refuse you cannot

be forced to take it.

Staff at the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly encourages people to look at the places suggested by hospitals to determine if they would consent or not to that place. But they are not required to take that placement if they believe it doesn't meet their needs.

Hospitals should not be scaring people who are already emotionally vulnerable into making a decision they do not want, nor have to make, banking on the fact that those making the decisions are not aware of their rights. The result of being sent far from family and friends can be devastating on the residents. Their health may decline and even death can occur when they are unable to see their spouses and others who would have provided support and care under what is normally a very stressful and difficult situation.

While the bed crisis in hospitals is a problem, the solution is not to take it out on elderly people whose health will be affected by these illegal policies.

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The Advocacy Centre for the Elderly is a community legal clinic funded by Legal Aid Ontario whose staff specializes in Elder Law. Anyone requiring further information may contact Jane Meadus or Judith Wahl, lawyers with the Centre at 416-598-2656.

Taking outreach way beyond our parish boundaries

SUE CRAWFORD
ST. MICHAEL'S, HAMILTON

On the third Sunday of Advent, Canon Lynda Keeley's homily gave me the perfect lead in to this article. Preaching on the gospel of Luke where John tells the people in response to their question "what then should we do?" John says "whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none..." She spoke of our power to change people's lives; to turn their "water of despair" into the "wine of hope." I think you will agree the people you will read about in this ar-

ticle did just that.

Last fall six men flew down to Haiti to assist in the building of a school and other projects. Four of the participants were from St. Michael's Anglican Church: Al Olsen, George Foster, Garry Gadsdon and Paul Martin. Garry Gadsdon had visited Haiti before with another project. Before they left an appeal went out to the congregation to donate items that could be used in the school and by the people. The response from our church was overwhelming. The excess luggage costs that incurred were phenomenal, but

oh how well the items were received by the people.

Before Brock Gadsdon, son of Garry, tells you his story of the project, read the following reflections that George wrote on his return. I think you will agree that it sums up the feeling that the men experienced during their stay.

As you move around Haiti, whether it be in the back of pickup trucks, in cars, driving through the city or walking on a small trail through the jungle there always seems to people watching and eyes following your every move.

The eyes of Haiti by George Foster

I see the dancing eyes of toddlers as they wave and call "Blanc, blanc" hoping for something to be thrown their way
 I see the smiling eyes of young children as they lean against you and reach out to hold your hand
 I see the eyes of the teens as they seek a quick glance and immediately look away to avert your smile
 I see the eyes of the twenty somethings with looks of resentment and anger
 I see the eyes of the sick—and we are told one in four is sick—with that vacant look of loneliness and despair
 I see the eyes of the young adults as they shyly smile thinking you might be a ray of hope for their children
 I see the eyes of the elderly—and the 50s are the elders in Haiti—with that distant far away stare
 I see the Eyes of Haiti and in my heart I wonder, how can this be?

Haiti Mission Trip 2006

BROCK GADSDON
ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH

It was supposed to be the long awaited and much talked about Father and Son fly-in fishing trip. Since I was a boy, my father and I had talked about the day when we would go on a trip like "Henry and Italo" or "Bob Isumi." When we would fly into a lake where no one had been before and catch fish by the hundreds.

Then one day my father asked me if I would like to go with him to Haiti rather than go away fishing. I knew this was a big decision for two reasons; he loves fishing and he had been to Haiti four years ago and said he wouldn't go back because it was too emotional for him. I said yes without hesitation and we started making plans to go.

Our mission team consisted of six men: Al Olsen, George Foster, Paul Martin, Cal Schultz, my father and myself. Over time I have come to see these men as close companions and brothers in Christ who I will always be bonded with now as a result of Haiti.

Being Christians at St. John, everyone probably knows someone who has gone on a mission trip. I thought that by talking to these people I was prepared for Haiti. This was far from the truth. Haiti is the poorest and the most densely populated country in the western hemisphere. Once the crown jewel of the French colonies, Haiti is now a place of poverty, disease and sadness.

My first of many lessons in humility was at the orphanage in Cape Haitian on Happiness Lane. As we turned down the narrow laneway the first thing that hit me was the smell. It was a combination of burning garbage, animal waste and sweat. Along both sides of the lane, in front of the houses, were ditches that were full of grey-green stagnant water and rubbish. The houses were nothing more than small one-room shacks that provided meagre shelter for families. Pigs, goats, chickens and children all shared the same playground of mud and filth.

The driver parked the truck in the lane outside the orphanage

and went in to pick something up. In a matter of moments children surrounded us. They were on the roofs and barefoot in the laneway. Most of the young boys were either naked or had a pair of old shorts on. The young girls were in old discarded Easter dresses with no shoes. In every child's face I saw the eyes of my own children looking back at me. These poor children were just born in the wrong place at the wrong time. I remember praying for the driver to return so that we could leave and I could stop crying.

For the rest of the week we worked in the countryside, away from the city. It was different in the country. People seemed friendlier, happier and healthier. We worked on two projects, the floor at the new seminary and a roof on a schoolhouse on a mountain called Coup David. I worked mostly on the schoolhouse. It was an hour hike through the jungle to reach the work site. I have never walked through more beautiful country or a hotter climate.

While working on the school, I had the opportunity to really get to know the local children as well as the Haitians we worked with. The children were amazing. When we gave them our lunch, they always shared, no matter how many of them were there. On one occasion I dropped some hair bands I was carrying to give to the school-teachers on the mountain. A little girl picked them up, caught up to me and gave them back. She had nothing, and she probably knew that I wouldn't miss the few hair bands that I had dropped; yet she made sure that I got them back. This was typical of the character of these children.

I formed a special friendship with Jonus, one of the OMS workers. He acted as my guide throughout the days, pointing out interesting things and explaining difficult situations. As we were roofing the school, he was telling me about the work he had done on his own home. He asked me to come and see it before I left for Canada. When he brought me to his home I was overwhelmed. I walked down alleyways past children playing



barefoot in areas where I wouldn't walk without work boots. When we reached Jonus' house, I could see him start to bubble with pride. It was a small three room hut in which his mother, sister, two children and he stayed. Three small bare bulbs provided light and one small hot plate was all they had to cook on. Jonus and I posed for pictures together in the doorway of his room. He was smiling with pride while I was saddened by his situation and inspired by his ability to appreciate what he had.

Haiti is unquestionably a land of highs and lows. For every negative that I saw, I experienced a positive. From the squalor of the streets to the angelic voices from a mountain orphanage filling the valley with beautiful songs. From the roadside tents of the voodoo

with doctors to the awesome hope-filled country churches. The week was filled with overwhelming emotion and prayer. It was a week I will never forget with people I will always remember.

Thank you to my father who has taught me how to work honestly, walk proudly and now how to live fully.

Appendix by Sue Crawford

When this article was written, George Foster was off in India on another outreach project helping to distribute bed-kits through the Sleeping Children Around the World program. Throughout advent our Parish Kids collected, pennies, nickels, and quarters to purchase bed-kits. For every \$30.00 collected an ornament was placed on the "Tree of Hope" in-

dicating that a bed-kit had been purchased. Members of the parish also donated and in all over 40 ornaments were placed on the tree. George has been associated with this project for a number of years. Last year, he was 'short listed' to travel to India and oversee the distributing of the bed-kits personally. As with the trip to Haiti, George paid his own flight and accommodation.

Outreach from our church has increased exponentially over the past few years. We are proud of all the projects in which our parishioners invest their time whether within the Parish boundary or across the world. Surely we can say that the people affected by these projects have had their water of despair turned into the wine of hope.

Bishop and Executive Archdeacon announce their retirements



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

He also announced that he has been asked to assume responsibilities at the Lambeth Conference by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. Along with being a chaplain to the staff of Lambeth which would include more than a thousand people, he will also manage other administrative duties. This means that he and his wife Carol will be away after his retirement for some six months in preparation for the Conference.

The bishop also took time to thank the team of people that work with him at the DRC. He pointed

out that ministry in this office is challenging and often thankless. At the staff meeting where he made his announcement, he carefully addressed each member of the Diocesan Resource Centre Staff, thanking them very specifically for their contribution to the ministry of this diocese.

In speaking to the clergy, the bishop spoke of how painful the church closures were in his ministry. He acknowledged that the pain was not only within the parish communities but it was his as well. At the same time he could see the new life and enthusiasm in the new parishes that have emerged from the

ashes. He also spoke of how painful the Residential School Issue was. He remembered the day early in his ministry as Bishop when he opened the letter that said that Niagara's share of the payment for this issue was two million dollars! He also remembered how moving it was to see the diocese come together at a special synod and take responsibility and live up to it.

The bishop said that one of his greatest joys was the ordinations that he had the privilege of presiding over. When he asked at the clergy meeting for those who he ordained to stand up—along with those who he brought in from

other dioceses—well over half the group stood. He spoke very warmly about the Order of Niagara. He has felt from the outset of his ministry that the work and ministry of the laity needed to be acknowledged. Many people who have done wonderful work in and for the church have been acknowledged through this order.

He also spoke of the changes that he has seen in his 40 years of priestly ministry. These changes include the move from the Book of Common Prayer to the Book of Alternative Services, the re-marriage of divorced people and the ordination of women. He commented that the church is all the better for the ordination of women in his estimation. He noted that he had appointed three women archdeacons and invited a woman bishop, Anne Tottenham, to be Assistant Bishop in Niagara. All of this led him to say that the Church of Canada will be faced in the next while too look at itself and to determine how it will "do church" in the next number of years. "We cannot be afraid of change," he added.

On a personal note he added that he intends to lead the Diocese of Niagara through the next General Synod. He knows that not all will agree with his directions, but he will stand by them in faith. He further pointed out that although he has a family, he considers the diocese an extension of that family. He re-iterated his love for each and every person in the diocese.

His words of wisdom to the clergy were summed up in two phrases that he found very important to his ministry and he encouraged all to adopt those phrases. The first was "Thank you." His thanks were in particular for the privilege of serving the local church in his ministry as priest and bishop. The second

phrase was "I'm sorry". There are things that he had done that he wished he hadn't. For those things he expressed his apology, and his commitment to move on. He ended his talk to the clergy by saying: "I love Jesus. I love the Church and I love you!"

Archdeacon Marion Vincett was ordained to the Diaconate in May of 1989 and to the priesthood by Bishop John Bothwell on May 6, 1990. She served as rector of All Saints, Erin and became Archdeacon of Greater Wellington in 1994. On January 15, 2000, she was appointed as the Executive Officer of the Niagara Diocese to serve closely with Bishop Spence in ministering to and leading the Diocese of Niagara.

Marion and her husband Paul, who teaches at Wilfred Laurier, share their lives with three wonderful children, Giselle, Peter and Matt, along with grandchildren Haven and Renee. Her children are spread all over the world, living in the UK and El Salvador. She looks forward to being able to visit her children and spend time with them and with her grand children after she finishes her service as Executive officer.

The words spoken about Bishop Ralph by his children are also very applicable to the Executive officer he chose to be part of his team. Together, Ralph and Marion continue to serve this diocese with a huge amount of love. Their love spills out into a joyful atmosphere, as so many in the diocese are accustomed to hearing their laughter and feeling the hope and love that they demonstrate.

Although Ralph and Marion have announced their retirement, the diocese looks forward to the next year of their ministry among us.

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Episcopal election process



ROB WELCH
CHANCELLOR

Bishop Ralph Spence's announcement at Synod Council on February 6, 2007 that he will be resigning as Diocesan Bishop next February and that he wishes Synod to elect a Coadjutor (successor) Bishop this coming June puts a process in motion that will be one of discernment for Niagara.

Canons and regulations of both the Diocese and the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario apply. Our Canon 2.1 and the Regulations attached to the Canon provides some guidance to the process. Synod Council acts as nominating committee and through a preferential balloting system selects ten initial nominees, at least four of whom must be men and at least four of whom must be

women. Synod Council also chooses a committee of seven persons who are designated as the Electoral Synod Nominations and Planning Committee and whose job it is to secure the consent of those initially nominated by Synod Council and prepare background material on those nominated and communicate that plus other information to members of the Electoral Synod. It is contemplated that the nomination process will take place at Synod Council's March meeting.

Additional nominations for Bishop—besides those nominated by Synod Council—are permitted as well, however, even up to and during the Electoral Synod if ten members of Synod nominate a candidate and he or she consents.

The Electoral Synod, composed of those clergy and lay representatives who would be members of a conventional Diocesan Synod, will meet on June 2 at Christ Church Cathedral. The Metropolitan of Ontario, Archbishop Caleb Lawrence, or his designate, will chair the meeting, which will commence with Eucharist. Voting will be by

Orders (Clergy and Laity) and the successful candidate will be the first to gain a majority of votes in both Orders on the same ballot. Balloting will continue until such a majority is achieved. If that individual consents to his or her election and no objection is lodged, then that individual will be consecrated and ordained Coadjutor Bishop of Niagara on September 30.

According to Section 2 of Provincial Synod Canon III, "Objection to the election of a bishop may be taken on any of the following grounds: The person so elected:

- Not being thirty years of age or more nor a priest in Holy Orders for at least seven years in the Anglican communion.
- Being deficient in training and learning.
- Having used simony, collusion or improper means of election.
- Being guilty of a crime or ecclesiastical offence.
- Teaching or holding at the time, or within the previous five years, anything contrary to the doctrine and Discipline of the Anglican Church of Canada."

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Choosing a leader

LINDA MOORE
CANADIAN CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP AND HUMAN VALUES

At this time of choosing a new bishop, a new formal leader for the church community, there is an opportunity to reflect on what we may want or expect from the individual that is elected.

What are the attributes, skills, knowledge, experience, and fit for the present and future context that needs to be exemplified in this person? What is the heart calling out to experience in their presence, in their actions, in their words?

What follows are some thoughts about leaders and 'leaderful' people for your consideration as you prepare to elect a new bishop.

Our Human Values

For all of our differences and diversity, we all connect at the root of values. Values are the core principles of living that human beings share. Growing evidence from around the world suggests that globally, human beings are connected through a common set of values that include freedom, love, tolerance, fairness, truth, and responsibility. Philosophically discussing human values is only one piece of the puzzle. What might these human values look like in the actions of a leader? Here is simply one perspective:

FREEDOM: Encourages personal liberty and rights of others to act from their own will.

FAIRNESS: Good judgment with equity and just treatment of others.

LOVE: Compassionate, expressing deep awareness and empathy for others.

TRUTH: Speaks what is so within the given context.

TOLERANCE: Values the unique and diverse contribution of individuals and organizations.

RESPONSIBILITY: Honours obligations and takes accountability for actions.

At the very least these human values are at the heart of a 'leaderful' person. Make no mistake. There is an intricate relationship between vibrant leadership and human values which deeply impacts community decision-making and sustainability.

Does your favourite candidate act in a manner that exemplifies these dominant shared human values?

Emergent Conditions

Leaders are everywhere and unmanifested potential abounds in the human psyche. Conditions exist where leaders naturally and effortlessly emerge. Formal leaders like the new bishop can influence these conditions both positively and negatively. Emergent conditions are affected by what the formal leader permits, encourages, provides and deconstructs.

We need the new leader to create the emergent conditions that will allow individuals to grow as 'leaderful' individuals and to assist all clergy to be the leaders they are meant to be.

How are the individual candidates influencing the emergence of leaders in their present role?

Leadership

Leadership is about fostering relationships, heightening and mobilizing awareness and stimulating conversations. As we are all well aware, a formal leadership title or position does not make a person a 'leader.' It is also true that a person who does not hold a formal leadership title or position can often be an extremely talented leader in how they live out their life. 'Leaderful' people:

■ Focus on their own self mastery and personal development

■ Stay aware and look to reduce the pain and suffering around them where they find it

■ Lead others to themselves so they too can be all they can be

■ Develop a 'followership' because of how they live out their life

How well do the individual candidates reflect this way of being?

Leadership Attributes

There have been hundreds of books written, lectures given and stories told of the necessary attributes of a 'leaderful' person and particularly of formal leaders. Out of all this has come a surprisingly consistent list.

When considering your new potential leader how do they as an individual rate against these following characteristics from your perspective?

INTEGRITY: Words and actions are consistent.

AWARENESS: Knows and understands own and others' perspectives of self and impact on others.

RECEPTIVITY: Listens to, understands and is receptive to others.

BELIEF: Possesses an inner trust/belief/faith.

HUMILITY: Holds a modest opinion of self.

INTUITION: Connects hunches/feelings/awareness to real context.

INTERDEPENDENCE: Respects, lives and works in the inter-connectedness of relationships and systems.

EQUILIBRIUM: Balances competing demands and stresses.

FOLLOWERSHIP: Creates a following by modeling 'leaderful' behaviour and creating an environment where others can lead.

CURIOSITY: Demonstrates a desire for discovery; asks meaningful questions to gain understanding.

RESOURCEFULNESS: Is creative and proactive with the resources available.

ADAPTABILITY: Adapts to meet the challenges and opportunities in the environment.

QUALITY CONSCIOUSNESS: Consciously and consistently pursues excellence.

Management skills

The role of bishop is also one of manager and formal leader of an organization with all the demands that go with it. They are the "senior executive" of the organization albeit a religious body.

How does your favourite candidate measure up to the skills required to run an organization?

RESULTS DRIVEN: Identifies, pursues the important organizational goals.

PARISHIONER CENTERED: Considers parishioners in decisions and actions.

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT: Identifies, builds and manages mutually

valuable and trusting relationships. **DECISION MAKING:** Understands and applies facts, perspectives, objectives and criteria for making effective decisions.

PLANNING: Reflects on past, present, and future or potential scenarios to develop a readiness for the future; plans to achieve predetermined goals.

ENGAGING OTHERS: Supports and motivates individuals and teams in the pursuit of the organization's goals.

DIRECTING OTHERS: Assigns clear and meaningful objectives and tasks to people.

SUPPORTING: Permits, encourages and provides the organizational conditions for people to succeed in achieving the organization's mission.

STEWARDSHIP: Ethically and legally manages corporate resources as though they were their own.

MONITORING: Regularly monitors outcomes against organizational measures

DEVELOPING OTHERS: Continually strives to build the people capability and capacity of the organization.

Life skills

The pressures of the position require an individual with highly developed life skills. Maintaining a 'centered' self is a challenge.

When considering the following life skills how well do you feel the individual candidates exemplify the necessary characteristics to be successful in the new role?

COMMUNICATION: Communicates effectively, demonstrating good oral, written, non-verbal and listening skills.

STRESS MANAGEMENT: Effectively manages pressures of life and work.

TIME MANAGEMENT: Manages time effectively by prioritizing, planning, delegating and following through.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT: Anticipates, accepts and leads change.

PROBLEM SOLVING: Effectively solves problems; demonstrating good judgment.

CREATIVITY/INNOVATION: Pursues and supports creativity and innovation.

SELF DEVELOPMENT: Committed to continuous learning; develops self.

Knowledge of the job

You may have noticed that there has been no mention of specific knowledge and experience of the technical side of the job. Those areas can be learned.

The small 'p' political acumen to survive in the politicized facets of the position is acquired over time.

By building a strong team of skilled individuals around them the new bishop can be successful without having all the knowledge required in the job.

The right fit

In the end the most critical factor will be fit. Who can best be committed to the mission and vision of possibility? Who holds high and lives the values and principles of a 'leaderful' person? Who can best lead the community forward?

There are no magic answers to choosing a leader. Simply consider the ideas presented and search your heart. Within you lies the wisdom to make the right choice for you.

The basest disease is sloth. It is that strange laziness and passivity of our entire being which always pushes us down rather than up—which constantly convinces us that no change is possible and therefore desirable. It is in fact a deeply rooted cynicism which to every spiritual challenge responds "what for?" and makes our life one tremendous spiritual waste. It is the root of all sin because it poisons the spiritual energy at its very source.

Alexander Schmemmann, Twentieth Century

Christ himself was despised by people, and in his direst need was abandoned by his friends and acquaintances to the insults of his enemies. Christ was willing to suffer and to be despised; and do you presume to complain? Christ had enemies and slanderers; and do you expect all to be your friends and benefactors? How will your patience be crowned if you are not willing to endure hardship? Suffer with Christ, and for Christ, if you wish to reign with Christ.


Thomas a Kempis, Fifteenth Century


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The art and power of dialogue



LINDA MOORE
CANADIAN CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP AND HUMAN VALUES

Since the beginning of time individuals have gathered in community to share ideas, explore possibilities and resolve the issues and challenges facing them. The wisest of these individuals came to know the art and power of dialogue within every conversation. I personally am a slow learner so for me my understanding came later in my life.

In 2000, on a train in India, six of us were gathered in a compartment that in the time of British rule would have been considered a second class car and was now deemed to be first class accommodation. The windows needed a good clean and when closed provided an opaque and foggy view of the world outside. The six berths were somewhat hard and lumpy and our luggage was stored in the remaining limited spaces at our feet. Using the washroom facilities was left to the last possible moment. Suspect of the traveling conditions we had ensured adequate water and our own food to see us through the fourteen hour journey.

Despite the context each of us looked forward to the adventure and our ensuing conversation. Early into the trip my friend Debashis, a wise and wondrous teacher, opened himself to the deluge of curious inquiries we had stored up. My friend, Bernie, a hospital CEO asked, "How do you change the behaviour of people who work together and shift the culture?" Debashis answered, "Start a dialogue."

At the time I felt it was a simplistic and even naïve answer to the complexities of a Canadian health care organization. Today my

ignorance still embarrasses me!

In that simple response Debashis set in motion a ripple effect that is still moving out and into the world.

Within the world of thought and through our formal education process we are taught to effectively debate our point of view. We set up debate clubs and the highest marks for essays and papers are given to those who can argue a specific perspective effectively. And yet this approach neither does little to assist us in understanding one another's perspective nor to bring unity and common, shared solutions easily and effectively to the forefront.

The art of dialogue has existed for eons of time. At the core, dialogue is based in a deep curiosity to learn the perspectives of 'other,' explore that perspective and to understand. It seeks to find a common truth, a common shared value, a common belief. It is the process of building on one another's views and ideas rather than arguing the deficiencies.

Dialogue seeks to explore all the corners and nuances of what lies at the foundation of the issue. No perspective is diminished, no idea is wrong, and each idea is valued as a facet of fuller understanding. Dialogue respects the wisdom in each person and by exploring multiple views moves towards unexpected solutions.

Dialogue requires discipline. It demands that we suspend our 'come back' to a view point different than our own. It demands a form of listening in which curiosity is the driver. It demands that the 'other' is more important than self and that what lies in the heart is as important as the mind. That intuition and feelings hold as much value as words and ideas. It truly is an art.

What I have learned since first embracing the concept of 'dialogue' is that my own egocentric nature can be tamed and focused in a direction of contribution to other. In listening deeply and withholding judgment, a new world of possibility opens up. I can see where there is pain and suffering; joy and fulfillment. In fact, there rarely is a need to insist upon my

solution any more. Rather this meaningful dialogue leads inevitably to solutions that respect each person involved while acknowledging choices to be made and options to consider.

Dialogue humbles me. Again and again as I listen, truly listen to others I am amazed at the magic. Out of attention to one another comes a new awareness, new possibilities and new opportunities. It holds great power to unite and heal.

Each of us has the capacity to sit with friends, family, colleagues and associates in this new way. We can set aside our need to be 'right' as an individual so we can do 'right' as a collective. We can begin to discover the deep innate wisdom that lies inside. We can make room for the introvert, the quiet ones who when the room gets still and silent find the place and space to speak what is so for them.

Dialogue provides the spaciousness to explore and expand, to dream and discover. In this place no one needs to win and therefore there are no losers. It is a co-active process where the intention is simply to explore every perspective with no pre-determined outcome.

It does require us to let go of our personal agenda and need to have our ideas prevail. It requires a beginner's mind, open and flexible. It requires us to still and center ourselves so we may truly hear another.

As parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, sibling and friend, imagine if the next time a challenge arose, a topic broached the first words you spoke were, "What is your perspective?" The second, "Tell me more." And the third, "What else do you think and feel?" What a different way to be with another!

If we stayed in dialogue until we truly understood the other, how much room would there be for conflict? Debate is a game of the mind of ideas and dialogue is the life stream of community, living and sharing, working towards harmony and understanding. It holds in it the art and power to transform, to create the space and place where peace can begin.

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Editor

Christopher Grabiec
905-312-8444 (ext. 101)
newspaper@niagara.anglican.ca

Advertising

Ted Manning
905-680-0615
advertising@niagara.anglican.ca

Layout: Kayn Leduc

Proofreading: Bryan Stopps

Mailing Address

Cathedral Place
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Publishers Advisory Board

Pam Claridge: 519-941-6804
John Janisse: 905-312-8444 (ext. 102)
Geoffrey Purdell-Lewis: 905-628-4176
Canon Charles Stirling: 905-383-1088
Carol Summers: 905-772-5641

Let Your Voice be Heard

The Niagara Anglican welcomes submissions from readers as Letters to the Editor. All submissions must include a name, telephone number, and email or physical address of the author for verification purposes. The newspaper reserves the right to edit submissions.

Moving the institutional church



RICK JONES
RECTOR - ST. PAUL'S, WESTDALE

By the time you read this even the most relaxed of parishes will have completed Vestry. That meeting of the Church that reminds us how institutional we really are. Institution is a bad word for many. The post-modern attitude to religious institutions is not positive. Many people, not just younger people today, see religious institutions as suspect at best, and irrelevant or dangerous at worst. They believe we are out of touch with post-modern society, backward looking, inflexible and judgmental.

Institutional thinking

What goes on inside our buildings is unknown to increasing numbers of Canadians. The occasional media attention to our differences vindicates, for many, their negative attitudes toward the Anglican Church. As Secretary of Synod, I value our Anglican ecclesiastical structure which has a good governance structure, allows for visionary leadership, and resources to be maintained and made available for mission from generation to generation.

The problem, it seems to me, is not with institutions in themselves but with 'institutional thinking.' Thinking that is backward looking, inflexible, dogmatic and self-satisfied.

There are many examples of institutions with 'institutional thinking' but there are also institutions that can be large, well organized and progressive thinking at the same time. Organizations that take innovation, quality and service seriously and deliver to real people in the real world, you know who they are! What would such a diocesan or parish institution look like?

Meeting people on their own terms

It would meet people's needs on their terms, not institutional terms. Gathered worship on Sunday morning is the bedrock of our institutions, but it isn't the only way to be the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ comes into being where Christians gather. Many of our parishes, my own included, can no longer afford the luxury of being the Body of Christ in the same forms.

We are looking with interest at the creativity of St. Aidan's Church, Oakville. With the leadership of their new rector Cheryl Fricker and in cooperation with St. Jude's Church, they are reinventing themselves as a community-centred church. Taking the needs of the people in the neighbourhood seriously, they are using their facility as a community meeting place, offering alternative worship in the Taizé style, and continually innovating, as

they meet people on their own terms. It is unclear what forms the Body of Christ will take at this point. It isn't clear what the facility will need to look like. The wonderful thing is that this congregation is not using 'institutional thinking,' doing it the same old way and hoping that, "They will come."

New ways for new people

The small group movement in many of our parishes that invites people to meet in homes, in parish halls or coffee shops is another example of the Body of Christ in different forms. At Holy Trinity, Hamilton, the Reverend Vicky Hedelius works with children and parents in the Tapawingo Daycare Centre, to bring the Christian Story, for those who wish it, into the circle time every day. Christian nurture is happening in a secular setting.

At St. Paul's, Westdale, two blocks from Mc Master University and Hospital we are wondering if we really need to create a coffee shop meeting-place to invite the hospital and student community into a new relationship with us. Can we risk other ways of being the Body of Christ?

Pete Ward, an English theologian, has coined the phrase "the liquid church." A lovely image of a Church that isn't solid but can flow out, permeate, and reform into different shapes to be the Body of Christ in new ways for new people, people who would never find themselves at home in our solid Sunday Services. We may be an institutional church but don't have to suffer from 'institutional thinking.'



Signed with the seal of ashes

CHRISTOPHER GRABIEC
EDITOR

By the time this paper reaches your hands the season of change and growth will have begun in many different ways. The headlines of this edition speak of huge change about to affect our diocese of Niagara. Bishop Spence and his right hand Archdeacon Marion Vincett have both announced their retirement plans. We certainly cannot blame them. They have worked long and hard to minister to the needs of this diocese and to usher the Anglican Church of Niagara into the 21st century! Stories will be told over the next month and we will certainly realize what a gift we have had in these two people. If we were to say, "well done, good and faithful servants," it might sound like a eulogy. This is far from a eulogy. First of all, we have a year of wonderful growth ahead of us under their leadership. And once, they hand over responsibilities to a new Episcopal team, we will all continue to benefit from Ralph and Marion's love and leadership in many ways.

Of course we also enter into the season of Lent with the seal of Ashes on our foreheads. I cannot help but reflect on what this means, if anything, in our contemporary church and society. Does anyone really care about these Lenten days?

The liturgist in me wants to shout from the hilltops that this is not so much a season of penance and giving up, but rather a season of initiation of new folks into the church. It has its roots in the preparation of catechumens (candidates for Baptism) for the great sacraments of initiation at Easter. Bishops were very busy in the early church teaching new folks (individuals and families) about the Christian mysteries. They even began to help them to understand the great secret of their gatherings—that when they came to the table of the Lord for the first time, they would indeed meet the Risen Christ who was so present in that community gathered together on the day of the Lord. The catechumens would do penance to prepare

for this marvelous day of resurrection and for this experience of resurrection in their lives.

The monastic communities influenced the church and eventually Lenten practices would be translated to the entire community in preparation for the celebration of Easter and for the renewal of their Baptismal commitment to be church in the world around them. This wasn't a 'bad idea,' but it was an idea that would be greatly distorted. In the middle ages and following, the penitential practices would be extreme, involving practices that we might even consider tortuous today. In recent decades the practices would become meaningless, since they involved more attention to weight loss than anything else. I remember a well-intentioned priest colleague that gave up meat every lent. He was always pudgy before Lent and would find himself quite trim for Easter—and was quite proud of it. There's nothing wrong with this—but I'm not sure it's entirely related to our Baptismal commit-

ment—other than our call to keep ourselves healthy.

In Michael Patterson's article this month he challenges us to become a church that stands for the "affirmation of one another." Perhaps he has hit the nail on the head. So often we are seen and in fact we live as a people in conflict. The Anglican Church around the world is riddled with conflict because of the righteous and polarized views of churches and dioceses. Instead of affirming one another's journeys we tell each other why we have 'erred in our ways.' This has been the case in the issues of the acceptance of actively gay clergy, the blessing of marriage of same sex unions and the acceptance of women in the ministry—especially Episcopal ministry. Many Anglicans of reason have advocated local option solutions to all these problems. This enables us to stay true to our convictions and to live as we feel called to live by the Spirit of God. At the same time, we can extend understanding to those who see it a different way or are called to live differently because of their culture (e.g. The Church in Africa). Why is it that we cannot accept one another with differing views, rather than portray to the world that we are the farthest thing from Christian in our divisions?

It happens on our parish levels as well. Bishop Spence and his team, have worked diligently in the process of amalgamating parishes to create communities of strength who can witness to the 'aliveness' of the Risen one in their midst. I suspect we know what pain this has brought to our Bishop, Marion and the rest of the team. Sure some of us have given up buildings but we have gained family. Where are our priorities? Is a building truly more important than building a viable and potentially dynamic Christian family that can continue the mission of the church?

On individual levels, we all know that division occurs within our parish communities. Sometimes it rears its ugly head when

we enter into conflict with rectors at Vestry meetings (see Rick Jones' article this month) and sometimes it shows itself as we criticize the efforts, and yes, sometimes the mistakes of others in the parish community. Should our parish communities not be models of unity and growth in a world that so desperately needs a model?

Lent is here and it is the season of change. Our church in Niagara is about to undergo much change on many levels. It's all positive and it's all supposed to make us more of a church. Michael Patterson asks the question "So what are you selling?" This is a great reflection as we move into the future.

We are about to decide on who we want to lead our diocese over the next few years. This is the time to pray for wisdom and for gentleness. We should first reflect in thanksgiving upon all the wonderful ways that our current leadership has led the Church of Niagara. It's also the time to look at the gifts of our many clergy who are so capable of leading our church. When doing so, let us proceed in charity, in love and in unity. Let us then not look to our governments as models of how we choose or treat one another in the election process! This is a time for us to look at our relationships within family, among friends and certainly in parishes. What are we saying about one another and what are we showing the world about ourselves.

If we are ever to return to a church that attracts people, so that we can restore the original purpose of Lent—A time of teaching and conversion for catechumens—then we must clean up our house and truly become a church that the world sees as united with a common cause. Yes, we are human and will disagree, but in our disagreement we can be one in witnessing to the presence of the Risen One among us! To answer the question above about Lent, let's hope that we all care about Lent this year. It's important and it holds the promise of new life for our church.

Volunteer Opportunity

Partners in Mission Coordinator for the Diocese of Niagara

The primary responsibility of the coordinator is to coordinate activities and communications involving Niagara's partnerships with other dioceses.

In order to do this work, the person selected will:

- Convene a small working group to facilitate event planning and to communicate to the diocese-at-large about partnership related news and events.
- Be knowledgeable about past diocesan partnerships and about resources at the parish, diocesan and national church levels.
- Be prepared to work with parishes and various diocesan groups to facilitate their engagement with the diocese's partnerships.
- Act as a member of the Diocesan Outreach Committee and work within its mandate and under its auspices.
- Be the first point of contact within the diocese for issues relating to our partnerships.
- If possible, be somewhat comfortable in Spanish since our current partnerships are with Cuba and Uruguay.

If you are interested in this work please contact Karen Nowicki, Administrative Assistant to the Division of Outreach, by sending an email to karen.nowicki@niagara.anglican.ca.

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God-shaped hole Our Eucharistic practices



SUSAN HUXFORD-WESTALL
ALL SAINTS, HAMILTON

It is five days before Christmas and I have many mundane things to do. Nevertheless I am constrained to write this after having read Michael Thompson's "An emptiness that God seeks to fill." How many of us are seeking to fill the God-shaped hole at the heart of our lives? Far more important, how many of us have recognised that hole? How many of us have discovered that life is a search

suck up everything that they are told, thus fulfilling Michael Thompson's statement that "doctrine can seem to settle things" and leave no room for newness, or are we prepared to put out into the deep and let down our nets for a catch (Luke 5:4).

Of course, this all necessitates a change in doctrine and, as Michael so aptly points out, "settled things leave little room for... the kind of newness God announces in 1 Samuel 3" and that is anticipated in Revelation 2:5.

Visiting my daughter in Edmonton, I read "Local church attendance a testament to evangelism." The writer, Liane Faulder, claims "forward-looking faiths buck social trends" and goes on to report the great increase in attendance at Pentecostal and Alliance churches. On the front page of the *Sunday Reader* we are

The Resurrection should remove the fear of dark death, but instead the church has promised forgiveness of sins.

after God? How many of us have recognised what Paul called "the God in whom we live and move and have our being" (Acts 7:28)? And if Paul was right, how many of us can accept that if God lives and moves in each one of us, then it is true that each one of us lives in God, for we are His creation?

It follows that the God-shaped hole at the heart of our lives is God. To quote Michael Thompson again, "it is not by doctrine but by the Word-made-flesh" that we can fill the God-shaped hole.

What is this "Word-made-flesh"? Christians know that it means Jesus, but we are hopelessly confused by the concept of "Word". Surely "words" are simply a means to express thoughts. The Creator needs only to think, and it is done. He/She expresses a thought and it is done. This is the Word of the Creator. Jesus is the template, or pattern, of whom we are meant to be. Jesus is the ultimate example of humankind as envisioned by God. Jesus is how we should be. If Jesus fills the God-shaped hole, then we will live as God has always wanted us to live. The emptiness will disappear.

But a word of caution is appropriate. The Rev. Wayne McNeilly of Evangel Pentecost Assembly in Edmonton recognises the great spiritual needs of most people and believes that there is a "God-shaped vacuum in all of us" Where Michael Thompson has "hole," Wayne McNeilly has "vacuum." Vacuums are dangerous places—they suck in everything around them, while holes require physical and mental effort to fill.

A vacuum or a hole; what is to be the Anglican approach? Are Anglicans to be unthinking vacuums that

told that "The ranks of evangelical Christians are growing while those of mainstream Protestant churches are shrinking." What's gone wrong?

Has our Church's emphasis on Remission of Sins instead of on the Resurrection of Life been a factor? Writing in *Guidelines*, the Bible reading fellowship from ABC, in December 2006 the Reverend Christopher Byworth states that those living in darkness without the light of the Messiah "fear dark death." In the past the Church has profited from the business of forgiving sins—indulgences were sold for profit for centuries before Martin Luther challenged the business. The Resurrection should remove the fear of 'dark death,' but instead the church has promised forgiveness of sins. It is only too obvious that sin has not been removed; God's world is full of it.

Jesus came to teach us not to fear death, hence the Resurrection. Have Christians and Jews been so haunted by Old Testament emphases on sin that they have missed the point? God gave humans freewill. He/She knew that humankind would experiment until they found the right way. This was all part of His Great Adventure. The trouble is that humankind is taking so long to learn. Did not Jesus die because of our sins and not for them? God sent Jesus as the template for our lives, to show us how to live, not to excuse us for the mess we are making of it. We rejected God's way by crucifying his Logos and we have continued to do so ever since. Forgiveness of Sins has turned out to be a Linus' blanket. We have gone on living contrary to God's wishes for the last two thousand years, confident in the belief that a final sacrifice has been made for us. We kid ourselves.

The cross, with which the ashes are traced upon us, is the sign of Christ's victory over death. The words "Remember that thou art dust and that to dust thou shall return" are not to be taken as the quasi-form of a kind of "sacrament of death" (as if such a thing were possible). It might be good stoicism to receive a mere reminder of our condemnation to die, but it is not Christianity.

Thomas Merton



PETER WALL
DEAN - CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

We continue, in Niagara, to maintain a ban on intinction, the dipping of bread/wafers in the chalice. This prohibition was introduced by Bishop Spence late in 2003, in response to the SARS threat in our area. There have been questions raised since that time on whether this prohibition should be relaxed; the Bishop has received advice which supports his position and we continue in this Diocese to hold to the standard that intinction results in unacceptable risks of infection.

There has been, over the past several years, a tremendous amount of research done on infection control, our liturgical practices, and the ways in which we can honour our history and traditions, while at the same time recognizing current realities and potential fears.

The common cup has long been a revered part of Anglicanism. Indeed, "Article XXX" of *The Thirty-Nine Articles* (BCP, 1959, p. 710) seems a direct repudiation of the long held practice prior to the 16th century of administering only bread to the people. The common Roman Catholic practice, prior to Vatican II, was to administer only bread to the

laity. So, for us Anglicans, receiving both bread and wine has been foundational. So, too, has the common cup as opposed to individual cups, as is the practice in certain denominations. This is more than simply a tradition; it deeply reflects our Eucharistic theology and practice. Gathering at the Lord's table Sunday by Sunday is the constitutive act of our Church; we make every attempt in our liturgies to remember what Jesus did and the way in which he did it. Sharing the one bread and one cup is an important part of who we are. For the majority of our history, this has been the only way in which we received communion.

Intinction is a recent development, some impetus for which has certainly come from fear of disease, and a late twentieth century preoccupation with being free from any kind of germs or bacteria. Some of this is most laudable; some of it is simply an over-reaction and an attempt to be free of all of something of which we can never be free. Some would link it to the 'bubble-wrap' syndrome, in which everything we buy or consume has to be so pristine and clean that we are absolutely protected from any risk. As an example, we who live in North America are amazed when we travel to certain parts of the world where meat, for one, simply hangs in an open air market—not a styrofoam tray nor a roll of plastic wrap in sight!

Sure there is an element of risk; there is risk in even coming to church in terms of spreading germs. Shaking hands is one of the surest ways

to leave oneself open to the possibility of catching something. I, for one, am prepared to risk something in order to be part of a community with others with whom I worship.

We do know from the science involved that properly cleaned and maintained chalices, with the appropriate and assiduous use of purifiers, along with proper hand cleaning for those who are administering communion, that the risk involved with the common cup is lower than that involving intinction. Hence, intinction is seen as a less desirable method of communication and therefore has been prohibited in this Diocese. Still and all, in the midst of this we need to be both sensitive and gentle. I was present once at a liturgy where the chalice bearer took it upon herself to speak sharply to a communicant who was holding his wafer waiting to intinct, telling the communicant, "You can't do that here." Surely, common courtesy and politeness would suggest that we do not use tactics such as those. What we do need to do is to continue the process of education through our parishes and communities. Attempting to discipline someone at the communion rail is precisely what the celebration of the Eucharist is not about!

Some people in our parishes have chosen to receive in one kind—many do this because of various allergies and other health concerns. This is a perfectly acceptable way to communicate. Meanwhile, we all need to both be aware of the issues involved, and to continue the process of education about Eucharistic practices.

The treasures on earth



ANNETTE HARRIS
ANGELICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where it goes rusty and moth eaten, and thieves break in to steal it" (Matt.6 v19).

There was a large upheaval in our house in the recent past—my husband decided he needed more office space. Much and many were the boxes, bags, trunks that were sorted through and turned over; some of it—most of it—was immediately tossed into black plastic bags, some was put aside until later, but decisions were made. Rare finds were unearthed, treasures—these old albums, photographs, 'lovely' hand-made mother and fathers day cards, greetings of all kinds that caused much reflection and pleasure.

How much of our lives are made up of such delightful moments, buried treasure, things put aside to be rediscovered at a future time. They may have even been put aside half a lifetime ago, and could still en-

rich us today; memories shared or passed on, journals re-read and reflected on, where we were, where we are now, where we could be... even Sunday school prizes found and readable still, our earliest years come back and re-found... our earliest teachers of God's word signed the books... buried treasure indeed from long ago witnesses to the gospel message.

Jesus did tell us not to lay up for ourselves treasures of 'the earth' but to look elsewhere. We are to 'lay up' heavenly treasure, the kind that moth does not destroy or rust away, or robbers steal. Lay up treasure that cannot be taken from you, build up a storehouse of what the heavenly Father bequeathed to us—i.e. the blessed knowledge of what His son came for... to tell us of the Father... all manner of miracles and healings and teachings, the crucifixion, the dying and rising again, the witnesses who 'broiled the fish' with Him, the ascension, the promise that He would be with us through all time. All of this is ultimate treasure, for us to know and keep by us in difficulties, times of doubt and uncertainty, times of loss and suffering, times of great upheaval in our world.

Jesus exhorted us time and again to pray, to pray for all, firstly to thank and praise our heavenly Father... to acknowledge the power and glory of

God... then to ask for our needs and those of others, deliverance from sin and affliction must be sought and asked for, then to leave all in the Father's hands, with the assurance that all we ask in the Son's name, in faith, will be answered.

Our Heavenly Almighty Father never gives in drops; He gives with open hands, showering us with good things. When Jesus left the earth, He went that the Holy Spirit of God could come and surround us, keep us and enable our endeavors that were of Him, so that we should not be alone, but be 'compassed about.' Holy mystery indeed: Given so much, and led by this same Holy Spirit; given the mighty gifts St Paul spoke of so eloquently. These 'gifts of the Spirit' are to be used for our benefit and His glory... Hallowed be His name. This is Treasure without equal.

We are given much for earthly comfort and delight: our pilgrimage here is brief, the way often made smooth for us. The treasures that are family and friends are wonderful indeed. However, we must remember our Lord's words to us, "lay up for yourselves heavenly treasure, where there is no moth and no rust to spoil it, no thieves to break in and steal it, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt.6 v20). Amen.

A book of imagination



IAN DINGWALL
RETIRED EXECUTIVE ARCHDEACON

Words of an old 1940's Frank Sinatra song have been humming away in my mind recently: "Imagination is funny/It makes a cloudy day sunny/Makes a bee think of honey/Just as I, think of you"

The song came to mind as I thought about the meaning of the word Imagination; and what it says to us and calls us to. The lyricist doesn't do justice to the word simply telling us that Imagination is funny. Imagination is far more than funny or nostalgic.

Albert Einstein's face appears on a large poster with the underneath caption that declares,

"Imagination is more important than Knowledge." That gets closer to the inside of the word. Imagination more important than mere knowledge—and that is from a person who became the 20th century's symbol of knowledge. Now, what has that to do with us, do you think?

For starters, the Bible is a book of imagination. We ought not to think of Scripture as primarily a long list of rules and regulations, or simply of events that had importance 4000 or just 2000 years ago. Instead we ought to understand our Scriptures, and why we read them so methodically week by week, as something we use to light and fuel our Imaginations.

Sadly it appears that Imagination is in short supply these days. Modern people seem more attracted to facts and figures. We are more intrigued by the solidness of Facts than the subtlety of Symbol.

And our stance or bias towards one or other of these points of view is often the root cause of many arguments and disagreements. That is, some of us are entrenched in facts alone while others look primarily to symbol and metaphors.

Clergy hear the accusation that, because our vocation and work is "in the church", we are not living in the real world. It makes me angry to be dismissed in that erroneous manner.

Of course, when a person starts with the assumption that 'real' refers only to that which can be touched or tasted, then reality shrinks our expectations of life. What we are capable of being and doing gets automatically scaled down to what is considered the basics.

Let's consider this for a moment. Neil Postman, a professor of culture and society at New York University, has quite a lot to say about this. He views our current preoccupation with computers as evidence of our poverty of imagination. And he argues that

the modern world has convinced itself that we have in fact a scarcity of facts and that our need is "more data."

To the declaration that we need more data, Postman replies, "Isn't that what our leaders in business and government—he could have added the Church—tell us to explain their reluctance to respond to pressing social problems?" he asks and then continues to caricature the situation by stating, "We're waiting for more facts to come in. More facts, that's our need. And we simply end up inventing more efficient computers to supply massive amounts of information that we just shuffle about on our desks or send off across the world on what we call the Information Highway."

Postman concludes, "We don't need more data. We have more now than we can handle or consume. What modern society is dying of is lack of courage, lack of dreams, a failure of nerve and no computer can give us that. There may come a day when computers will be able to do even more than they are capable of now—to speak or even to think. But never to dream!"

Why does this stimulate me so much? Simply because I think

ine as Paul describes the attributes and responsibilities of love. Imagine the results if we took them seriously.

The great Jesuit theologian, Teilhard de Chardin, put it beautifully: "Someday, after mastering the winds and the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love and, then, for the second time in the history of the world, Humanity will have discovered fire."

Sadly the preacher shouted from the pulpit, "Fire, fire!" and the congregation answered, "Where, where?" The preacher replied, "Everywhere but in the Church."

You see, Scripture isn't dry bones for with imagination we can see that God's call to us is now; not some long ago story that is pleasant but sterile if and when we allow it to remain in the past.

To all of that moderns might answer, it is only your imagination. We can reply "everything is only imagination." We live by and in our images; our image of what the world could become.

Just words? Just images? Maybe. But those images make our lives and could make a new world.

Walter Brueggemann, the scholar of the Hebrew Scrip-

To be invited to use our imaginations is the essential work of the Church.

that the Church has a problem here too. We so often adhere to the slogan of policeman Joe Friday—remember the television series *Dragnet?*—who constantly admonished the people he was questioning with, "Just the facts, ma'am, just the facts."

But my concern starts when we acknowledge that the Bible is a book of the Imagination.

And there are myriad scriptural passages which confirm that. There are two examples which come to mind because they have been in our Sunday lectionary recently. Just think of the words and events and then let your imagination run away with you for, given the opportunity, they will stimulate our minds and hearts towards all kinds of good.

In Genesis we read of Moses being spoken to by a voice from a bush. When was the last time you talked with a bush. But that's the story and the ensuing dialogue between God and Moses led to revolution. God bade Moses to go back and lead his people from slavery to liberty. Moses' first reaction was negative. "But who am I?" he said.

The Divine response? "Never mind who you are; instead remember who I am."

Think about that the next time you are confronted with a decision or a plea for assistance.

And in that same lectionary selection there is Paul's treatise on love (1 Corinthians 13).

That Hymn of love gives more than plenty for us to imagi-

tures, says that the Bible "funds our imagination." Think of the Church in that way. Think of Sunday as that kind of day.

Sunday is the day we come to be part of each other as we assemble to hear and listen and allow Imagination to embrace us. In the humdrum of life when we often become burdened by events and other people and ourselves, in worship we come to be excited and stimulated by God. So join in each Sunday and get loaded up with metaphors and pictures of God and of each other and of our world, and what we could become.

Imagination means welcoming facts that are often ignored. It means taking risks that things are not really what they appear to be. Imagination, if allowed, will enable us to reclaim our child-likeness. Children haven't yet been constricted by the narrow restraints we call Adult Reality. For children the whole world is a background for those imaginative enough to see things as they could be.

To be invited to use our Imaginations is the essential work of the Church. To put your minds, your problems, your heartaches and your joys in the context of Imagination, and acknowledge that you have needs but also the ability to change and move forward, instead of resting in the ruts.

Imagine a new You. Imagine a new Church. Imagine a new World. Imagine your life caught up in something bigger than yourself. Just imagine.

If a person happens to be 36 years old, as I happen to be, and some great truth stands before the door of his life, some great opportunity to stand up for that which is right that is just, and he refuses to stand up because he wants to live a little longer and he is afraid his home will get bombed, or he is afraid that he will lose his job, or he is afraid that he will get shot... He may go on and live until he's 80, and the cessation of breathing in his life is merely the belated announcement of an earlier death of the spirit.

We die when we refuse to stand up for that which is right. We die when we refuse to take a stand for that which is true. So we are going to stand up right here... letting the world know that we are determined to be free.

Martin Luther King Jr.

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With Christian Journeys Inc. led by Archdeacon Ian Dingwall

September 16 to 29, 2007

The tour will take us to several places of both general and Anglican interest.

Some of the locations include, Salisbury (Stonehenge), Bath, Durham, York, Glastonbury, Oxford, London, Canterbury.

We will also visit Lindisfame (St. Aidan) and the Holy Isle where we'll join in the Sunday worship of the parish church.

The cost will be \$3695 and includes air and land travel with all breakfasts and dinners.

If you wish to receive more details, please contact Ian Dingwall by calling 905-637-3449 or sending an email to idingwall@cogeco.ca.

Everyone is invited to attend an information gathering at 10:00 am on February 10 at St. Christopher's Church, Burlington (662 Guelph Line, south of the QEW).

BULLETIN BLOOPERS

These sentences have appeared in church bulletins. Please enjoy!

- The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.
- The sermon this morning: "Jesus walks on the Water." The sermon tonight: "Searching for Jesus."
- Our youth basketball team is back in action Wednesday at 8:00 pm in the Recreation hall. Come out and watch us kill Christ the King.
- Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
- The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been canceled due to a conflict.
- Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "Hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you.
- Don't let worry kill you off; let the Church help.
- Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again," giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
- For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.
- The Rector will preach his farewell message after which the choir will sing: "Break Forth into Joy."
- Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
- At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.
- Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.
- Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.
- Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.
- The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.
- Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 pm. Prayer and medication to follow.
- The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.
- This evening at 7:00 pm there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.
- Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10 am. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the BS is done.
- The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.
- Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7:00 pm. Please use the back door.
- The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement Friday at 7:00 pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
- Weight Watchers will meet at 7:00 pm at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

Let us fast in such a way that we lavish our lunches upon the poor, so that we may not store up in our purses what we intended to eat, but rather in the stomachs of the poor.

Caesarius of Arles, Sixth Century

In search of The Holy Grail



LYNNE CORFIELD
ARCHDEACON OF BROCK

It all began with what seemed like a simple note left on the Rector's desk in September 2006. The note read something like this: "Lynne, do you know where the antique chalice and paten set is? It would be nice to have them appraised when the Antique Road Show is on at St. John's later this month. Muriel." Hmm, what chalice and paten would that be?

The chalice and paten in question were given by Bishop Charles James Stewart on his first visit to the parish of St. John the Evangelist (Stamford, Upper Canada) in 1829. The parish history book states that the set is symbolic of the "Communion of Saints in this parish. The 'Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ' offered to us today, was offered in this same vessel by the Reverend William Leeming to the founders of this parish. Buildings are erected and are later removed to make way for larger ones, rectors follow in orderly succession, but the Communion taken from the Chalice of the first congregation is the link binding us to our past."

The search began

The story began to unfold and the mystery as to the whereabouts of the chalice and paten is still unsolved. It seems that in 1988 the church was robbed and the safe was stolen. The safe was found on the church property, broken open and one set of hardware had been stolen, but the valuable antique set was still in the safe! Whew! Now the problem was what to do with them? You can imagine the relief at finding the chalice and paten, after feeling that they were stolen, however, now there was a storage problem. The safe was obviously not a safe place to store them. As the story goes a box was built for the set and they were then hidden in a wall the Rector's office.

Many calls have been made and leads followed up, but still no chalice and paten have been uncovered. Muriel Hall, the writer of the note has called many people who might have had a clue about the whereabouts of the chalice. The former Rector, The Reverend Bob Brownlie, now residing in Winnipeg, was most helpful. He was very clear that a hiding place had been made in the wall of the bathroom in the Rector's office above the door. Bob

drew a map and faxed it to us. Map in hand, our handy dandy People's warden broke the ceiling open and had a good look around, but had no luck! Then as luck would have it Reverend Brownlie was visiting Niagara Falls in November and paid a visit to the church. Bob led the way into the Rector's bathroom and pointed to the exact spot that he remembered being the place where the chalice and paten were stored. The warden broke into the wall, two more holes—we are now up to four holes in the wall—to find nothing!

Metal detector investigation fails

In telling the story at Regional Council I happened across a metal detector enthusiast, disguised as a Regional Council rep from All Saints, Ridgeway. This lovely lady became excited and drooling at the thought of a good treasure hunt came over to St. John's, detector in hand, and the search began. Muriel arrived in hot pursuit and the two ladies combed the walls of the Rector's bathroom and closet, carefully listening for the right 'beep' that would mean that the chalice and paten were in the wall. They did come across one such spot and were excited, until they realized that on the other side of the wall, the picture frames had metal clasps that were causing the alert. The trail had gone cold again.

Later that week, ardent warden began to comb the office with the metal detector and found the spot behind the photo frames, and just in case this was the spot, made two more holes... to no avail! Just for good measure, another corner in the ceiling was opened for a total of seven holes in the wall. The Rector's bathroom is looking like the place we send the people who are mad at the rector, give them a hammer and wait until they come out feeling much better!

No stone has been left unturned. Everyone who might have any information has been contacted by Muriel Hall. The archives have been searched and we did find a photograph of the chalice and paten on display at an open day in April of 1990, which means that they were retrieved from the hiding place at that time. That is the last time that they were seen.

Hidden treasure

We are asking if anyone knows the

whereabouts or might have any information that could lead us to finding an important part of our story. 2007 is the 50th anniversary of the new church that was opened at St. John's in 1957. This church that was founded in 1820 was bursting at the seams in those days, and no one could have imagined that there would come a time when people would not be going to church every week as a matter of course. The old St. John's was abandoned when the doors of the new church were opened; a new church hall and a new rectory were all added at this boom time. The people who were courageous and determined managed to raise the money and make the plans to fulfill the dream that God had planted in them. This is what is possible when we are open to God being at work in each of us; we can dream big dreams and with God's help, we can accomplish great things.

The missing chalice and paten are a piece of the story of a pioneer people and a link to all those who have gone before us, linking past and present. The lesson to be learned here is about continuity; how do we pass along stories and information to each other when people come and go in a parish and leadership changes almost yearly? What happens when something like a robbery makes us feel fearful and so we hide our treasures? How much of this is a metaphor for the way we are with our God given gifts and talents? Our fears often cause us to hide our talents, and when we hide them they become forgotten about and we all lose the opportunity to see someone shine. It is particularly sad to think that somewhere along the way, our hidden treasures were completely forgotten about, and now seem lost forever. Think about all the special occasions when we could have enjoyed using this set. Think about the treasures that your church might have that are too precious to use, but most of all think and pray about your own gifts and talents, the God-given gifts that are you; don't hide them but make sure that you use them to the best of your abilities. God Bless!

And don't forget, if you hold a piece of the story that might lead to us finding the 'Holy Grail' please contact the office at St. John's by calling 905-354-1227.

EVENTS

Niagara Cursillo
www.niagaracursillo.org



19

March 2007

World Day of Prayer

St. Paul's, Shelburne

The churches of Shelburne come together to celebrate the World Day of Prayer. Service of Word and Song followed by a time of fellowship.

March 2, 10:00 am

World Day of Prayer

Holy Trinity (Chippawa), Niagara Falls

Ecumenical service to be held at Drummond Hill Presbyterian Church. Service was prepared by the women of Paraguay.

March 2, 1:30 pm

Strengthening Your Faith Journey

Grace Church, St. Catharines

Grace Church will host a Lenten Presentation and Pot Luck Dinner with the Reverend Mark Curtis. Scripture reflection, prayer and song promise to reawaken, strengthen and re-new one's faith journey. A free will offering will be taken.

March 2, 5:30 pm

Life in the Eucharist

St. John the Evangelist, Hamilton

A program to prepare children and their families for participation in the Eucharist event involves a simple dinner and family activities.

March 2, 6:00 pm

Youth Dance

St. David's, Welland

Dances are held every other Friday for those in grades 5-8. Pizza and pop will be available to those who attend.

Cost: \$5.00 per person

March 2, 16, 30, 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Fundraising Concert

Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

The second in the series of fundraising concerts, Saint Luke's Anglo-Catholic Church presents an organ recital by our own organist and music director, Zachary Windus. Performing on the St. Luke's unique tracker pipe organ, Mr. Windus will present a range of music from various locales and centuries. The recital will include works by Georg Boehm, Edward Elgar, Leon Boellmann, and John Stanley. After intermission, it's the audience's turn to make the music. The congregational singing of a selection of popular and traditional hymns will be followed by organ arrangements of hymn tunes. Tickets are available by contacting St. Luke's at 905-529-1244. All proceeds will go to the St. Luke's Organ Restoration Fund.

Cost: \$12.00 per person

March 3, 7:30 pm

Breakfast with the Bishop

St. George, Guelph

Please join us for breakfast as we welcome The Right Reverend David Ashdown, Bishop of Keewatin to St. George's for the weekend. Bishop Ashdown will share some of his experiences and challenges as he ministers in one of our partner dioceses.

March 3, 8:30 am

Church for Dummies

St. Simon, Oakville

If you want to know more about why we worship the way we do and why we do some of the things we do, during a service, then this

gathering is for you. Contact the office for more information.

March 4, 12:00 pm

All My Relations

Children and Family Ministries, Hamilton

This interactive, educational event for people of all ages returns to St. George's, 83 Church Street, St. Catharines. The day will feature workshops led by First Nations presenters, a dinner highlighting native foods as well as drumming and dancing. For more information or to register, contact Christyn Perkons by calling 905-527-1316 (ext. 460).

Cost: \$7.00 per person

March 4, 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Parish Breakfast

St. Columba, St. Catharines

Come for fabulous eggs, toast, and fresh fruit salad, and meet parish family members from the other service. Proceeds will be given to Primate's World Relief & Development Fund.

March 4, 9:00 am - 10:00 am

Lenten Book Study

St. Paul's, Shelburne

Henri Nouwen's *Return of the Prodigal Son* will be the focus of our discussion during this Lenten Book Series. Please call 519-925-2923 to register.

Cost: Books will cost \$20.00

March 7, 14, 21, 28, 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Lenten Lunch and Discussion

St. Paul's, Shelburne

Everything you wanted to know about Christianity but were afraid to ask; Alright, maybe not everything, but we are open to discussing the questions that are on your mind about Christianity and the Anglican expression of it. You are invited to join us for a lunch of soup and scones following the 11:30 am Eucharist as we discuss the beliefs we profess or wonder about.

March 7, 14, 21, 28, 12:15 pm

Via Media Faith Study

St. Aidan's, Oakville

What is the meaning of our lives? Join us to explore this and more. Dinner will be included. Call 905-845-6111 to register.

March 7, 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm

3 Cantors in Concert

St. John's, Ancaster

The 3 Cantors will perform here at St. John's. This is a very special and wonderful concert and all proceeds are going to PWRDF and other outreach programs. Tickets are available by contacting 905-648-2353.

Cost: \$20.00

March 7, 7:30 pm

Lenten Film Series

St. John the Evangelist, Hamilton

We will be hosting a film presentation and speaker. For more information contact the church by calling 905-522-0602.

March 9, 7:00 pm

Walking the Labyrinth

Holy Trinity (Chippawa), Niagara Falls

As the Lady of the Labyrinth, Canon Elaine Hooker will walk us through the Labyrinth dis-

cussed in the February issue of the *Niagara Anglican*.

March 10, 10:00 - 2:00

Via Media Faith Study

St. Aidan's, Oakville

So what does it mean to be a Christian in the 21st century? Join us to discuss this and more. Dinner included. Please call 905-845-6111 to register.

March 14, 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm

Pasta Supper

St. David's, Welland

Enjoy Italian meatballs, pasta, salad, rolls, tea, and coffee. Eat in or take-out available. Everyone is welcome on the third Thursday of every month.

Cost: \$8.00 per adult, \$3.50 per children aged between 3-10

March 15, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Youth Group Retreat

Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

Members of the Youth Group will be attending the Saint Michael's Conference Alumni Weekend. It is at the camp near Durham, so please get your registration in early so we can arrange rides etc.

March 16 - March 18

Taize Night Prayer

St. Aidan's, Oakville

A candle-lit hour of quiet prayer using the song and prayers from the Taize community. Everyone is welcome!

March 16, 7:30 pm

Saint Patrick's Day Dinner and Dance

Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

A traditional old-fashioned Irish Spaghetti Dinner and Salsa Dance are on the menu in honour of Saint Patrick! There will be no bar so the kids can come, no dress code so the teenagers can feel comfortable and the music just a dull roar so you can still talk. Proceeds will go towards Saint Luke's Neighbourhood Assistance Program.

Cost: \$5.00 per adult, \$3.00 per children under age 10

March 17, 6:00 pm

Soup Dinner and Entertainment

St. Columba, St. Catharines

Join us for a soup dinner as well as live entertainment. For tickets contact Eleanor Lewis, Sharon Grimstead, or Dee Provost.

Cost: \$10.00 per person

March 17, 6:00 pm

Harbour Proclamation

Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

The annual Opening of Hamilton Harbour Proclamation will be part of the Evensong. The Mission to Seafarer's joins in this service with the Parish of Saint Luke, their Chaplain and our Rector being one and the same. Various dignitaries from the City of Hamilton, The Harbour Commission, Her Majesty's Naval Forces of Hamilton, The Royal Hamilton Yacht Club, Leander Yacht Club and groups who work with shipping will be invited to attend along with all interested parties. There will be a reception afterwards for the participants.

March 18, 7:00 pm

Blast from the Past

St. Barnabas, St. Catharines

Organ player Peter Tiefenbach, best known for his collaboration with 'Primadonna' Mary Lou Fallis, will join forces with trumpet player Stuart Laughton, a founding member of The Canadian Brass for this Primavera Concert.

Cost: \$25.00 for the general public, \$15:00 for students

March 18, 3:00 pm

Spring Vacation Adult Dance

St. David's, Welland

Come join the fun at the Lion's Community Centre in Welland. There will be a DJ, finger foods, a cash bar, door prizes, Sheri Austin's Highland Dancers and surprise entertainment. Prizes will be awarded for the two best vacation outfits.

Cost: \$12.00 per person

March 23, 7:30 pm - 1:00 am

Canadian Bandurist Capella

St. Luke, Burlington

Join us as the male voice group accompanied by musicians playing the multi-stringed Ukrainian Bandura pays a return visit to St. Luke's.

March 24, 8:00 pm

Communion and Cuthbert's K.I.D.S.

St. Cuthbert's, Oakville

Join us for fun, interactive sessions exploring the meaning of Holy Communion.

Cost: Optional donation to cover the cost of materials.

March 24, 9:00 am

Ladies' Guild Sale

Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

Our ladies are having another of their Mountain Mall Charity Sales with all sorts of goodies and treasures for sale. Drop by the mall and check out the great stuff they have this year.

March 31

Youth Group Bowling For Cancer

Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

The Youth Group is planning for the next bowling tournament at Skyway Lanes on Barton St. to raise funds for Cancer Care Ontario. Signup sheets and donor cards are available. The whole parish will be looking forward to sponsoring our young people.

March 31

50th Anniversary Pot Luck Supper

St. John the Evangelist, Niagara Falls

Join us as we look back over 50 years in the new church building. Pot luck supper will start with open microphone for reminiscing together. Let's share our stories and remember the 50th anniversary of the day they started building the new St. John's.

March 31, 6:00 pm

Social Night

St. Columba, St. Catharines

Another night of fun, cards, laughter, snacks and prizes. Couples and singles are both welcome.

Cost: \$2.00 per person

March 31, 7:00 pm

Taking a stand for an inclusive church

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

It is unimaginable to them that our Lord created us as we are, so they fully expect that we can change. Of course it would be very convenient, and oh so tidy, if we helped the process by wanting to change.

As mind-numbing as this line of thinking is, one is somewhat able to understand it when it is presented by those who have not been afforded the opportunity of a well-rounded education. However, when encountering a learned person, someone who has succeeded in a post-secondary environment, someone whose vocation is to help and heal others, it is nothing less than bigoted, intolerant and ignorant. It is this intolerance and bigotry that has created an Anglican Church that is losing its ability to love all of its members and many in its community. Although it may be polite to lend an ear to Anglicans preaching from a pulpit that is unrecognizable to us, one that is perhaps an ocean away, it is high time we dispense with politeness when that pulpit is in our own diocese, and that preacher sows the seeds of division and intolerance.

Homosexuals were stung

It is long overdue for the leadership of our Church, at the diocesan and the national level, to support all its members. Not doing so leaves us once again trying to catch up to the

reality of social acceptance in society. Are we soon to be cast in with the Roman Church which continues to write the book on unimaginable discrimination? Our leaders, in order to secure short term harmony, have abandoned their duty to make the right decisions. Is extending full membership and full rights to Anglican gays and lesbians the right decision? Whose walk is closer to that of Christ's? A gay man who will respectfully partake of the Lord's Supper with any priest who is celebrating? The African Bishop who will not offer communion to that gay man? Or, the rector of a Niagara parish who will not shake his Dean's hand because their opinions differ on this issue?

At the 2005 Niagara Synod, the members passed by a two-thirds majority the motion dealing with same-sex blessing. Those speaking in favour spoke of rights and acceptance and tolerance. Those opposed, clearly as sincere as those supporting, spoke of clinging to old beliefs and quoted passages from the Old Testament that suited their position. A Niagara Deacon referred to such argument as "scriptural bludgeoning."

Following the announcement of the result our Bishop spoke to those assembled, appealed for the harmony that we still hope is out there somewhere, assuaged those who voted in the majority, and used his prerogative to refuse as-

sent to the motion. Given the manner in which General Synod had dealt with the matter a year earlier, most in the affirmative camp conceded that his hands were tied and his refusal to give assent was unfortunately inevitable. Many left expecting the issue to come to a vote a year later. Some, like me, felt strongly that a second motion would pass as easily as the first and that our Bishop would give his assent. After all, is it not reasonable to suppose the leader of an organization, religious or otherwise, could not twice refuse a motion passed by the body that elected him? That it was not even moved at the 2006 Synod is testimony to the reality that those opposed to homosexuals openly playing a full role in the church and being extended the rights that heterosexuals enjoy, were stung by the vote in 2005 and rallied to ensure that another vote would not take place.

God will give them the grace to live in chastity

Those who have worked to stop gays, lesbians and transgendered Anglicans from being treated as full members of our church have an impressively organized and internationally funded organization behind them. Their moniker, Essentials, would lead an outsider to infer that they represent all that is important and right and correct about Anglicanism. That this

group espouses the 'essentials' of what it is to be an Anglican, undoubtedly its members believe this. After all, Christ didn't mean every neighbour when he taught us to love one another, did he?

In their Montreal Declaration of 1994, Essentials stated that "the church must seek to minister healing and wholeness to those who are sexually scarred—that all forms of 'sexual hypocrisy' and abuse are evils against which Christians must ever be on guard."

They believe that "the only sexual relations that biblical theology deems good and holy are those between husband and wife." They call on single Christians to be celibate and offer that "God will give them grace to live in chastity."

Integrity can and must do more

A couple of years ago I spent New Year's Eve with a small group of Christians that worship at Pentecostal Churches. I have no doubt that they would, for the most part, embrace much of what is in the Essentials declaration, especially on the issue of same-sex blessings. As I looked around the room I counted six divorces amongst the dozen or so people that were there.

These people and their Anglican Essentials bedfellows have nothing to teach anyone about the sanctity of marriage. They will quote scripture as the basis of their beliefs and use it as a weapon in their debate. However,

unable to fall back on their bible teachings in times of personal unrest, off they run to the state for relief. Now that is hypocrisy!

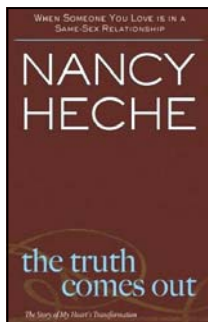
In the Niagara Anglican last year, 'Integrity' was described as "a wonderful group of Anglicans who meet once a month to support each other and to share ideas and experiences".

These get-togethers are without question very useful and enriching and the work being done by Integrity on a national and local basis certainly contributes to the debate against those who are opposed to homosexuals being full members of our church.

Could Integrity be doing more? I believe that it can and it must. I believe that it must vigorously seek out new members and additional funding to better publicize its message. It must also improve supportive clergy to be more active in ensuring that our church leaders, at the diocesan and national levels, know that continued inaction or further moratoriums will drive good people away from our church; good people that support full membership and full rights for gay and lesbian Anglicans.

Now is, without a doubt, the time for our church to open its arms and equally embrace all its members. It is time for The Anglican Church of Canada to support me as I have supported it.

The Lord is my shepherd. He created me and He loves me.



The Truth Comes Out

Nancy Heche
Regal Books, 2006

CAROL SUMMERS
ST. JOHN'S, YORK

They were known as the cute couple, chosen as King and Queen and the "most likely to succeed" by their peers. Nancy began her married life madly in love with her husband. He was handsome, charming, gifted and recipient of a full scholarship to Indiana University. They had four beautiful children and were active members of their church.

A young doctor shattered her life when, in Bellevue hospital, he told her that the mysterious illness her husband had been suffering from, for about a year, was killing him. The doctor called it AIDS but twenty-three years ago very little was known about it; Nancy certainly knew almost nothing. Her husband died within three weeks and she was left feeling abandoned, betrayed, angry, and full of hatred, most of it aimed at homosexuals, as she had discovered her husband had been living a double life while away on 'business trips.'

Nancy's life quickly spiralled downward as, only three months after her husband died, her beloved son was killed in a car accident. She lost herself and became promiscuous, still praying to God and attending church but in great despair. It took five hard years but she felt she had finally come to terms with her life and she renewed her commitment to Christ. Another heartbreak came, nine years later, when her daughter, Anne Heche, made a quick call to tell her that she was madly in love with a woman, Ellen DeGeneres. Nancy could not believe her daughter could choose this lifestyle when homosexuality had been responsible for destroying their lives. When she had learned about her husband, she had kept it quiet but here was her daughter entering a lesbian relationship and announcing it in all the media! She cried out to God.

The subtitle of the book is "The Story of My Heart's Transformation" and it goes on to tell, with great frankness, about the long, difficult, journey to where she is now and how God healed her heart and replaced hatred with love. Nancy still does not condone homosexuality but has changed her attitude towards those who are gay.

This book was written to the Church, whose response to issues of sexuality she finds woefully inadequate and which provided no support for her and her family while they struggled with this issue. It is an attempt to help those of us who have a close friend or family member who is in a same-sex relationship. So often, we are told we must wholeheartedly embrace homosexuality or, conversely, that we must completely shut out those who are gay. How do we respond without compromising our convictions? This book attempts to answer that question and offers a perspective that spoke to me and helped to heal my troubled heart.

About the author

Dr. Nancy Heche is an instructor at Loyola University and Judson College, Illinois and has a master's and doctorate in Pastoral Counselling.

People in the news

- The Reverend John Ripley has submitted his resignation as Administrator of the All Saints Mission, Niagara Falls, effective January 31.
- Our deepest sympathy to the Reverend Richard Moore, Rector of Jarvis and Nanticoke, on the death of his father, Thomas Oliver, aged 91 years, today, January 31. Funeral service was held at Dods and McNair Funeral Home in Orangeville on February 3.
- Mrs. Wendy Phipps was issued a Bishop's Permission to function as Lay Pastor at St. John's Church, Nassagaweya, under the direction of the Rector and during the Bishop's pleasure, effective February 1.
- Canon Patrick Doran has been appointed Interim Pastor at Grace Church, Waterdown, and effective February 1.
- The Reverend Kathy Morgan submitted her resignation from Christ Church, Woodburn, and has been appointed Rector of St. John the Divine, Cayuga, and St. John's, York, effective March 4.
- Canon Carol Skidmore, has submitted her intention to resign from St. Matthew's effective April 30, 2007. At this time, Carol will be on leave of absence and move toward retirement in 2008.
- The Reverend Paula Crippen has been appointed rector of All Saints Church in Hamilton.
- The Reverend Anne Crawford, Deacon at St. Luke's Church, Burlington, has been appointed Deputy Director of Deacons.
- Aaron Orear will begin his ministry as Assistant Curate at St. Jude's Church, Oakville, following ordination on May 27. Aaron will in fact join the team at St. Jude's on May 15, functioning in a lay capacity prior to his ordination.
- The Reverend Graham Thorpe and Mrs. June Thorpe will celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary on March 20. Also, the month of May will mark their 50th year in Canada. Congratulations to the Thorpe's!